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CHRIST ALL AND IN ALL:

OR

SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT SIMILITUDES,

BY WHICH

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS DESCRIBED IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF.

Forty-Seven Sermons

Preached by that faithful Servant in Christ

THE REV. RALPH ROBINSON,

OF SAINT MARY WOOLNETH, LONDON, 1651.

A new Edition, Edited and Corrected.

BY

THE REV. T. SHARP, A. M.,

WOOLWICH.

Πάντα καὶ ἐν πανί χριστός. Paul.

Sufficit omnibus unus Christus.

"Christus omnia factus est omnibus." Ambrose.

"Aridus est omnis animæ cibus, si non oleo isto infunditur, insipidus est si non hoc sale conditur. Si scribes non sapit mihi, nisi legero ibi Jesum, si disputes aut conferas, non sapit mihi, nisi sonuerit ibi Jesus. Jesus mel in ore, melos in aure, in corde júbilus." Bernard, Sermon xv. in Cant.

WOOLWICH:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY THE EDITOR; SOLD ALSO BY BAYNES,
53, PATERNOSTER-ROW; AND WESTLEY AND DAVIS, 10,
STATIONERS' COURT LONDON.

MDCCCXXVII.



W. Scroggie, Printer, Woolwich.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

READER,

I freely confess my inability to describe the many excellencies of these Sermons, which are so very full of every subject that glorifies and endears our adorable and all-amiable redeemer: containing a large portion of doctrinal, experimental and practical Theology, presented in their beautiful and regular connection; every Page teeming with "*Golden Sentences*," and far too invaluable to be lost to the Church of Christ.

The holy *Baxter* observes, "I think it of service to the souls of men, to bring such old and excellent writers out of oblivion and the dust."

The Author, "was born at *Heswall* in *Worrall*, *Cheshire*, 1614. He studied at *Cathrine's Hall*, *Cambridge*, where he continued till 1642; he then sided with the Presbyterians, and soon after became Minister of *St. Mary de Woolnoth*, and Publisher of several Theological matters favouring of Presbytery. He died the 15 June, 1655, and was buried in the chancel of his church before-mentioned, on the north side of the Communion Table, under the stone, called *Mr. Buckminster's stone*." *Wood's Athenæ Oxoniensis*.

That the reader of these Sermons may be greatly profited, and God and his Christ greatly glorified, by this attempt to be useful, is the sincere prayer of

THE EDITOR.

TO THE READER.

Christian Reader,

These profitable Sermons may occasion both sorrow and joy unto ourselves and many others, who may be well acquainted with the Reverend Author.

1. Grief, by minding us of our great loss in his death. As the widows were found *weeping, while they shewed the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them.*

2. Gladness, in that though *he be dead, he yet speaketh*, not only by his holy life, but also by his useful labors, for both which he *shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*

This good man had high natural abilities, which were heightened by industry, and brightened by his graces; but he always had a low esteem of himself, and his services. When he was upon his death-bed, he said, "That he judged not any of his papers worthy publishing, but yet he looked upon these as most probably profitable." In these Sermons we have the lively picture of the man in his ministerial capacity, drawn up by his own pen, represented to the reader's view; whereby is fully discovered his laborious longings after the *excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord*, to be improved for his own personal benefit, and communicated for the edification of his Auditors, By his opening the scripture metaphors, which familiarly reveal Christ; besides the many notions which shall be beamed into the understanding, the serious musing christian will be much advantaged in occasional meditations.

If, when these Sermons have been diligently perused, there could be a clear discovery annexed of the Author's gifts for prayer, (which were more than ordinary,) together with his pious, winning conversation, and cheerful readiness to be assistant in all religious exercises, (wherein he was lovely and exemplary.) Then the judicious reader would lamentingly say, "Oh! how great was London's loss by the death of worthy Master ROBINSON, taken away in his youth, when growing towards greater maturity, for the further service of the church of Christ." In God's counsels for the managing of Israel's wars with their adversaries, this charge was given,—*that fruit bearing trees should not be cut down*, and that, upon this account, *for the tree of the field is man's life*. The application hereof may be (as we humbly conceive) seasonable for the awakening of secure christians, who be not affected with the removal of their fruitful ministers, out of the land of the living: For thus we argue,—might not a man extirpate a

vegetative plant, growing in the field of foes, because it was the means of life; how great divine displeasure then do those providences express against this city and nation, whereby most generous plants in God's own orchard are cut down and cast into the dust! How startling are such dispensations, whereby the Lord himself by the strokes of his own hand, taketh away so many ministers! *Pastors according to his own heart*, who were wont to feed souls with knowledge and understanding. But yet his majesty hath not left us without manifold means of strong support and consolation; for ever blessed be his name! We have just occasion to break forth into praises, in the language of the Psalmist, *The Lord liveth, and blessed be our rock, and let the God of our salvation be exalted.*

1. We have not only this useful treatise, with many more excellent books, the fruits of the heads and hearts of God's worthies (with the expectation of more, to be made public) for our confirmation and edification in grace, but we enjoy the labors of many famous, orthodox, learned, and rightly constituted ministers, both in this city, and other parts of this nation, whose lives and liberties, with hearts to do service, are still continued through God's mercy, notwithstanding our *all-forfeiting sins*, together with the malice of Satan, and the inveterate rage of his instruments, who act against the gospel under different disguises and apprehensions, of whom we may say;—*They compassed us about, yea, they compassed us about; they compassed us about like bees. They thrust sore at us that we might fall, but the Lord helped us. The Lord is our strength and song, and is become our salvation.*

2. We enjoy the sweet influential presence of his all-sufficient majesty in our church assemblies, though they may be despised and deserted by many ignorant, passionate, rash, self-conceited persons, in the virtue whereof we do walk, and hope to walk from strength to strength, in the ways of his truth and fear, notwithstanding all our present and expected difficulties in our journey towards heaven. Somewhat through God's grace we do experimentally know, of that river, *the streams whereof will make glad the city of God.* And we remember that brave speech of magnanimous *Luther*, when dangers from opposers did threaten him, and his associates, "Come let us sing the 46 Psalm, and then let them do their worst."

3. And this especially doth relieve our spirits, that the Almighty (upon whom we will and do depend) is independant and unchangeable. For, howsoever we do need ordinances, as the means appointed to build us up yet further, till God shall be pleased to give us the promised inheritance in glory, yet his highness neither needeth ministry nor ordinances, nor any such things, but can easily, and will infallibly accomplish all the precious promises of his rich grace, though more of our best gifted ministers, with the most taking means of our spiritual advantage, should be quite removed from our reach and use. Those breathings of faith recorded by the Prophet *Habakkuk*, are warming in such cases to believing souls. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, &c. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

4. But hereto we may annex the encouragement of our hopes, *that our eyes shall still* (according to God's promise) *see our teachers*, and that we shall not be left without God through the want of a true gospel ministry. 1. Both because of his abiding compassions (notwithstanding our ill deservings) from whence in former ages his church hath been supplied with a succession of faithful, painful ambassadors, though there have been therein many people of very high provocations. 2. And also, because there is a considerable accession of young men, rich in gifts and graces, who from time to time seek entrance into the ministry, through the right door of ordination, though it be an ordinance woefully slighted by multitudes, yea, by some who pretend much love unto the gospel. And therefore seeing Christ who holdeth the *stars in his right hand*, is obliged to maintain his own officers in the church, till his *saints arrive at perfection*; we, his ministers, in reference to our calling, may boldly say, *we shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord*. Reader believe it, nothing more endangereth the loss of the gospel, than contempt and non-proficiency. Therefore once and again, we most heartily intreat thee to prize and to improve a gospel ministry, and all other means of grace which the God of thy mercies doth yet vouchsafe. *To him that hath*, (and fruitfully tradeth what he is trusted with) *shall be given, and he shall have abundance*. Let not this book be received in vain, which the good hand of providence doth now tender unto thee. This field is full of gospel treasures digged out of scripture mines, for thine enriching in the knowledge of Christ, and what knowledge is so necessary, excellent, or profitable? For from hence do issue all things which pertain unto life and godliness. Hereby our love to Christ is enflamed, our longings after him enlarged, our faith in him confirmed, our joys in him raised, yea, by the knowledge of him he is possessed and improved, both for growth in all graces, augmenting of all spiritual comforts, and preparation for everlasting glory. Therefore commending this book, which hath by one of us been diligently and carefully compared with the Author's own notes; together with all *thy other* helps for heaven, unto my faithful improvement; we commend thee to the *fulness of the blessing of the gospel* through Jesus Christ, in whom we desire always to approve ourselves.

The real friends and servants of thy soul,

Simeon Ash.

Edm. Calamy.

William Taylor:

May 28th 1656.

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SERMON I. COL. 3.—11.

“ Christ is all, and in all.”

THE Apostle in the two former Chapters persuadeth these *Colossians* to constancy in the faith of the Gospel, in which they had been instructed, against the practice of those false Apostles, who labored to draw them away to Jewish ceremonies. He doth in this Chapter, as his manner is, give them sundry exhortations to holiness of life.

I. He stirs them up to the more diligent study of heavenly things, by many arguments, *v. 1, 2, 3, 4.* *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, &c.*

II. He persuades them to mortify their earthly members, those vicious motions and affections of corrupt nature, which were still too strong in them: he doth not only urge this in general, but in many particulars, all which are pressed by several arguments, *v. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* Amongst other arguments this is one, *they have put off the old man, and put on the new man, v. 9, 10.* This new man he describes three ways, (1.) It is the renewing of the holiness of our nature, which we lost in *Adam*. (2.) It consists in the knowledge of the mystery of the gospel. (3.) The example or archetype according to which this new man is fashioned is the image of God our Creator: this argument the Apostle follows, *v. 11,* he sets it in two ways.

I. By removing the false opinion of some, who neglecting this new man, confided in their external privileges, and condemned all such as wanted them; as in the former part of the verse, where there is neither Greek, nor Jew, &c. that is, in this new man it matters not to what nation a person belong, whether Jew or Gentile; nor doth it matter what outward prerogatives a person has, whether he be circumcised or not; nor doth it matter what is his outward state, whether bond or free, &c. none of these differencies are looked at or considered. No man is more accepted of God for having any of these things, nor is any less esteemed of him for want of them, *there is neither Jew, nor Greek, &c.*

II. By proposing the true opinion; *but Christ is all, and in all, q. d.* All those external things which are accounted

so honorable, without this new man, do not avail to salvation nor will the want of all these hinder a person of salvation, and acceptance with God, if the great work of regeneration be wrought, for *Christ is all, and in all*. We have such another expression, Gal. 3, 26 to 28. *Ye are all the children of God, &c. for as many of you as have been baptized, &c. there is neither Jew, nor Greek; bond, nor free; male, nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

The words are a proposition; in which we have,

I. The subject Christ; *but Christ*.

II. The predicate, *He is all, and in all*. He is all things that are necessary to salvation, and that in all persons, who do believe in him, who are renewed and regenerated by his grace. I intend to go over all the comparisons by which Jesus Christ is set out in Scripture, and I have begun with this as a preface or introduction to the rest; I shall handle it generally, and draw from it this observation, *viz.*

Doct. *The Lord Jesus Christ is all things in, and to all persons that have a true saving interest in him; Christ is all, and in all*. It doth not exclude the Father and Holy Ghost, but all other things, as circumcision, uncircumcision, &c. A like phrase, Acts 4. 12. Christ is all, and in all to every believer. Here are two rules to be observed. (1.) *We are not to understand this (as excluding the other persons of the Trinity,) for the whole God-head is all in all to believers, as well as Jesus Christ.* But because Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity is the head of the mystical body, by virtue of which union, true believers are made one mystical body with Christ, Eph. 1. 1. therefore is this principally appropriated to him, to be all in all to those that are united to him by saving faith. (2.) *The truth of this proposition is not from the human nature, but from the divine:* it is from the power of the divine nature in Christ, that he is all in all to his people; because the fulness of the God-head dwells bodily in the human nature as part of the person. Now he is all in all to them in these five respects.

I. *By way of merit*. Jesus Christ is meritoriously all in all to believers; whatsoever they are, or have, or do, or can expect, is only upon the score and account of his purchase and merit: they enjoy no good thing upon any other terms, but only upon the consideration of Christ's merits; because he hath done and suffered for them, and in their stead there-

fore do they partake of those blessings, which make them happy to all eternity. The Patriarchs in the old Testament, and Christians in the new, have pleaded with God for all blessings only upon the account of Christ. Dan. 9. 17. Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, that is desolate, for the *Lord's sake*. Of this the Apostle speaks, when he saith, that Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, 1 Cor. 1, 30. Christ doth bestow upon us, and God is pleased to accept for us, the merit of Christ's passion, death, obedience, and righteousness.

II. *Christ is all in all to them by way of conveyance.* As he hath merited all for them, so 'tis from him and through him, that all good things are communicated to them, John 14. 6. As we have all *propter Christum*, so we receive all we have, *per Christum* through Christ. He is not only the fountain, but the *Medium* and conduit, through whom all a believer hath is conveyed to him. Jesus Christ is a believers root, John 15. 5. Now as all the sap, which is in the branches is communicated through the root, so all the good which a believer hath is derived through Christ. God hath put all that good he intends to bestow upon his elect into Christ's hands, as a Feoffee in trust, and from him as the great Lord Steward is all communicated unto them. Of this the Apostle speaks, Col. 2. 19. *From Christ the head, the whole body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.* Jesus Christ is as it were, the hand of God, through which, all good things are sent in to us ; he is the door, John 10. 7.

III. *Christ is all in all to them, by way of efficiency.* He it is that works all in all in his Saints, 1 Cor. 12. 6. *There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* This our Saviour bears witness unto, John 15, 5, when he tells us, that *without him we can do nothing*. The soul is the principle of all action in man, Jesus Christ is the principle of all motion and spiritual action in his Saints, for he is the soul of their soul ; not a good desire, or a good thought, but what is inspired by Jesus Christ ; the Apostle doth freely acknowledge this, Gal. 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, &c.* so Phil. 2. 12, 13. *Work out your own salvation, &c. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

IV. *Christ is all in all to them virtually.* He is instead of all things unto them. Solomon saith, that money answereth

all things, Eccl 10. 19. it is meat, drink, clothes, house, lands &c. all things that are vendible may be procured by money. Jesus Christ is *virtually* all things, he makes up all things that are wanting; hence it is that he is in Scripture compared to all things, to food, to clothing, to physic, to gold, to health, &c. because he stands for all these things unto the souls of his Saints; hence is that promise, Rev. 21. 7. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things.* Jesus Christ is for all uses and purposes. This is in the text; he is circumcision to the Gentile, wisdom to the Barbarian, &c.

V. *Christ is all in all to them by way of benediction and sanctification.* It is from him that any good they enjoy becomes a blessing to them; he makes every thing effectual for those ends for which they are appointed. No good thing would be good to us without the benediction of Christ; yea were it not for his blessing, every good thing would prove a snare, a cross, and a curse to us, as they do to them, who have no interest in Christ. This is that which Solomon saith Prov. 10. 22. *The blessing of the Lord maketh rich.* Thy health would be thy greatest sickness, thy wealth would be thy ruin, thy parts and thy abilities would be a snare to thee, did not Jesus Christ sanctify them by his blessing. All the good the Saints enjoy, depends upon Christ's blessings to make them good to them.

THE APPLICATION FOLLOWS.

I. *How injurious to Jesus Christ are they who mingle other things with him, as the causes of their salvation?* The Papists mingle their own merits, righteousness, indulgences and sufferings of other men, with the merits of Christ, as the causes of their justification and salvation: what else is this but to deny the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ? If he be all in all for justification and salvation, he needs not have his merits eked out with such kind of helps as these are. If Christ be all in all, then these are superfluous, yea, the addition of them derogate from, and destroys the fulness and all-sufficiency of Christ; yea Christ who is all in all to believers, will be nothing at all to them who are not contented with him alone. *Christ is become of none effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace,* Gal. 5. 4. Consider this you that are self-justiciaries.

II. *If Christ be all in all, then is every thing nothing at all, without Jesus Christ* All the world, the riches, pleasures,

honors of the world are but emptiness without Christ. *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity*, Eccl. 1. 12. That man hath nothing, that hath not Christ, who is all things; the world is but *nigrum nihil*. Thy wisdom, thy parts, thy children, thy offices, thy preferments, thy lands and revenues, all thou hast, if thou want him that is all things, can amount to nothing; they are but cyphers without a figure. O that men would consider this!

III. *What rich inheritance have all those who are truly interested in Jesus Christ? Christus meus & omnia.* They possess him that is all in all, and in possessing him they possess all. *I have all things my Brother*, saith Jacob to Esau, Gen. 33. 11. He that hath him that is all in all, cannot want any thing. *All things are yours* (saith the Apostle) *whether things present, or things to come, and you are Christs*, 1 Cor. 3. 22. A true believer, let him be ever so poor outwardly, is in truth the richest man in all the world; he hath all in all, and what can be added to all.

IV. *It shews the reason why the Saints are so fearful of losing Jesus Christ.* They value all things at a low rate in comparison of him: they would rather lose all than Christ, they are contented to part with liberty, estate and life, rather than with Christ: is there not cause for it? Christ is better than all things else. Riches are something, liberty is something, life is something, but Christ is all in all. There is nothing besides Jesus Christ that is good for all uses; garments are good to cover, but not for food; meat is good to feed, but not to warm, &c. but Jesus Christ is good for every use, for all persons, for all times, for all sexes, for all conditions: they know if they lose Christ, they lose all things. If a man had all his estate in one jewel, you would not blame him to be very careful of keeping that. Jesus Christ is their all, they seek him when they are deprived of him, with greatest care; they keep him when they have him, with the greatest diligence, Cant. 3. 1. *I sought him, I found him, and would not let him go*; do not wonder at it, for he is their all in all.

V. *That no soul esteems Christ aright, that doth not esteem him all in all.* To esteem any thing equal to Christ, is to disesteem Christ; thou dost never truly account him *any thing*, till thou account him *all things*, yea, better than all things, and all things as nothing in respect of him. If thou canst not make up all things in Christ, thou makest him

but a poor Christ; if thou canst not make him a friend in the want of a friend; an habitation in the want of an habitation; if thou canst not make him rich in poverty; if there be any condition in which Christ will not suffice thee; if Christ be too little to satisfy thee, thou dost but undervalue him; he is never truly accounted any thing, till he be accounted all things.

VI. Learn hence. *The misery of those that want Christ.* He that wants Christ, wants all things. *Lord, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?* Saith Abraham, Gen. 15. 2. He had much, and yet because he wanted a child, he wanted every thing. The soul that wants Jesus Christ hath indeed nothing. The Apostles possessed all things when they had nothing, 2 Cor. 6. 10. *Having Christ they possessed all things* Those that want a saving interest in Christ, possess nothing though they may seem to have all things, all they have is emptiness; yea, all they have is a curse, because they have not Christ. O that God would convince men of this truth!

VII. *Its their duty to carry themselves towards Christ, as those that account him all in all.* How is that?

1. *Love him and prize him above all.* Thy love is better than wine, Cant. 1. 2. Above wife, husband, children, life. Christ is not loved at all, till he be loved above all, Mat. 10. 37.

2. *Be contented with Jesus Christ in the want of all other things.* Make up all thy wants, all thy losses in him. Encourage thyself in Christ, when thou art discouraged in all other things; rejoice in him, when all things fail, Hab. 3. 17, 18.

3. *Make him thy end in all.* Let him be all in all to thee finally: refer all to Jesus Christ as the ultimate end of all, hear, pray, meditate, do, and suffer for the glory of Christ. The Apostle referred all to Christ as the supreme end of all, *that Christ may be magnified, &c.* Phil. 1. 20. if Christ be not the Alpha and the Omega, the first motive, and the last end of all, thou dost greatly undervalue him.

4. *Be sure thou go to Christ for all thou wantest.* If comfort, if zeal, if pardon, if strength, &c. he hath it for thee, and it is for his dishonor that thou shouldest go to any other, 2 Kings 1. 3.

5. *Do all in Christ's name and strength,* Eph 5. 20 Col 3. 17

VIII. *How careful should men be to prove their interest in Jesus Christ?* 2 Cor. 13. 5. you want all, if you have not

interest in him. Signs of this. (1) *Have you his Spirit?* Rom. 8. 9. the effects of the spirit. (2) *Are ye like Christ?* 2 Cor. 5. 17. (3) *Are ye willing to be Christ's?*

IX. *Let the presence of Christ in others be all in all to thee* Though they be poor, yet if Christ be in them, though unlearned, &c. if thy children have Christ, though they want parts, beauty, &c. yet esteem them.

SERMON II. COL. 3.—4.

“When Christ our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.”

THE world, and the things of the world, are great enemies to the work of grace: they do a long time hinder the first planting of it in the soul; and when it is planted, they do hinder the growth, and progress of it. The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful, Mat. 13. 22. The Apostle knowing this doth in the beginning of this Chapter labor to raise the *Colossians* to the more diligent meditation and studying of heavenly things, that being above the world, the work of God might prosper better in their hearts. *If ye be risen with Christ &c. v. 1. 2.* This he presseth by two cogent arguments (1.) *They are dead to the world. v. 3.* for ye are dead. By faith they are partakers of Christ's death and by their profession they are under an obligation of dying more and more. (2) *Their life is hid with Christ in God, v. 3.* They are appointed to a higher kind of life than that which other men live, therefore they ought to seek after those things which appertain to this life. Now lest any should object; if the life thou speakest of be a hidden life, what advantage will it be to be so mindful of it? the Apostle answers, *v. 4.* though it be for the present a hidden life, yet it shall be revealed, and that perfectly. When Christ who is our life shall appear &c. In which we have these two *Propositions*, viz.

I. Jesus Christ is a believers life.

II. That Christ who is a Believers life shall appear. Of these in order.

Doct. I. *That Jesus Christ is a believers life.* For the understanding of this, we are to know that a Believer hath

a two-fold life, for I shall not speak here of the life of nature, which a Believer enjoys, not as a Believer, but as a reasonable creature, Jesus Christ is a Believers life, as he lives the life of nature, Acts 17. 28. In him we live, move, and have our being: 'tis from Christ that we live the life of men. But to wave that, a Believer as a Believer hath a double life. (1.) *The life of grace*, which he lives after he is regenerated by virtue of the Spirit of Christ living in him, and uniting him to God by Faith. (2.) *The life of glory*, which he shall live in heaven to all eternity after this life. The soul begins this life immediately upon its departure out of the body, and the body shall enter into the possession of this life immediately after the resurrection, and re-union of soul and body.

Both these kinds of life are a Believers, as he is a Believer; and Jesus Christ is a Believers life in reference to both these. And because both of these are included in the Text, the one of them, the life of grace is but the inchoation of, and a preparation to the life of glory; I shall speak of both of them in the handling of the Doctrine.

Jesus Christ is a Believers spiritual life. He is so to a Believer in these four respects.

I. *He is their life originally.* It is Jesus Christ that works this life in their souls. He is the Creator and Former of life in them. The second *Adam was made a quickening spirit*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. As the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so *the Son quickeneth whom he will*, John 5. 21. Thy soul had never fetched out spiritual breath, had not Jesus Christ breathed into it the breath of life. *The time cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live*, John 5. 25. The ordinances are the instrumental cause, but Jesus Christ is the efficient cause of animating the soul by a spiritual life.

II. *He is their life materially.* He is that principle by which they live. Every living creature hath some intrinsic principle of that life which it lives. Jesus Christ is the inward principle of a Believers life; He is the soul of their soul. The Apostle speaks of this, Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.* It is only by virtue of the souls union with Christ that it comes to live the life of grace. He is the foundation, or form, as I may say of their life.

III. *He is their life conservative.* He it is that doth preserve

this spiritual life in their souls; by continual communication of himself, he maintains and upholds the life of grace, from dying and perishing. When they are sleepy, he awaketh them, when they languish and faint, he recovers them. *He strengthens the things which remain, that are ready to die.* He removes those inward distempers which waste this spiritual life, and he blesseth those ordinances which feed this life. When *David* was going down the hill, and in regard of this spiritual life was almost at the dust of death, so weak that he could scarce fetch his breath, Jesus Christ did restore and renew him again, *He restoreth my soul*, Psal. 23. 3. he cast water upon the dying plant, and made it green and vigorous again. Of this the Apostle speaks, Col. 3. 3. *Our life is hid with Christ.*

IV. *He is our life exemplariter.* He is the example and pattern according to which we are to live. Jesus Christ is the rule according to which we are to walk; he is the copy according to which we are to write. One end of the incarnation and life of Jesus in the flesh, was to set us an exact and perfect pattern for our imitation, 1 Pet. 2. 21. And by the diligent viewing and studying of his example, is our spiritual life carried on to perfection.

THE USES OF THIS POINT ARE THESE.

I. *That all those that are without Jesus Christ are spiritually dead.* The Scripture accounts all unregenerate sinners as dead men; they are dead in sins, they are dead unto God, they are dead unto grace; they are as truly without spiritual life, as the body is without natural life, from which the soul is departed, *This thy Brother was dead, and is alive again*, Luk. 15. 32. Conversion is called the quickening of the dead. Mat. 11. 5., because all who are unconverted are to all spiritual considerations in a dead condition; and it cannot be otherwise, because they have no interest in Jesus Christ, who is the author and principle of spiritual life. The Apostle asserts this clearly, Eph. 2. 1, 12., he tells them v. 1. *That they were dead in sins and trespasses*, he gives them the reason, v. 12. *because at that time they were without Christ*, And so another Apostle tells us, 1 Joh. 5. 12. *He that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son hath not life.* Till Christ be formed, the soul is a dead thing, without either life or motion; and this is a very miserable condition, for a dead soul is far worse than a dead body, inasmuch as the

soul is more excellent than the body.. Consider a few particulars. (1.) *Dead souls are loathsome.* Nothing is more noisome than a dead body. *By this time he stinketh,* Joh. 11. 39. *Let me bury my dead out of my sight,* saith Abraham, even of his wife, Gen. 23. 4. she that was the delight of his soul while she was alive, became noisome to him when she was dead. The soul that is spiritually dead, is very loathsome, both to God and man. The Scripture compares them to filthy carrion, Ps. 14. 3. *they are altogether become filthy.* They defile all that comes near them; whatsoever they meddle with, whatsoever toucheth them, is defiled by them. 2. *They that are spiritually dead, have no use of any of their spiritual senses.* The soul hath senses as well as the body, but he that is dead cannot use any of them; he cannot hear; he cannot see; he cannot taste; he cannot smell; he cannot feel; he cannot hear Christ's voice in the Gospel; he cannot see the glory of Christ, nor of grace; he cannot feel the heavy weight of sin, he cannot taste the sweet and delicate pleasures of Jesus Christ; he cannot smell the fragrant of Christ's sweet ointments; he has no pleasure in those things that are most pleasant in themselves, and most desirable to such as are spiritually alive; he is to all spiritual things, and all spiritual things are to him, as if they were not. 3. *This spiritual death, if it be not removed, is a certain fore-runner of eternal death.* Blessed and happy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on him the second death shall have no power, Rev. 20. 6. but he that continues still in this spiritual death, shall for ever be under the power of the second death, 'the eternal death.' And this is the state of all such as want Jesus Christ.

II. *That the spiritual life which is in the soul of a Believer, shall never totally and finally die;* it may be at death's door, it may be ready to die; so it was with the Church of Sardis, Rev. 3. 2. A Christian may in regard of his spiritual life, be as a tree in the depth of winter, no difference to all outward appearance between him and a dead plant; but it is impossible that the spiritual life should utterly be extinguished because Jesus Christ who is our spiritual life, lives for ever. *Your life is hid with Christ in God,* Col. 3. 3. hid as in a root, for safety and security. *Because I live, ye shall live also,* Joh. 14. 19. while the root liveth, the plant cannot die; while the fountain runneth, the streams cannot cease; while the olive-trees convey their oil through the pipes into the lamp,

the lamp cannot go out. A living Christian may grow very weak, but he cannot die. Jesus Christ must cease to live, before the life of grace in a Saint can utterly perish; while the cause continueth, the effect will.

III. *That there is a true spiritual union between Jesus Christ and a Believer.* This is one of the great mysteries of the Gospel, that Christ and a Believer should be made one; its set out by many examples, as of root and branches, Joh. 15. *init.* head and members, Eph. 5. 3. foundation-stone, and the superstructory stones, Eph. 2. 20. meat and eaters, Joh. 6. 56. husband and wife, Eph. 5. 32. This very doctrine makes it good. He could not be our life, if he were not united to us, and we to him: 'tis by virtue of our union with him, that we come to draw life from him. As the soul and the body are united, so are Christ and a Believer; the whole mystical body is called by his name, 1 Cor. 12. 12. *so also is Christ*, speaking of the Church

IV. *Deadness of spirit, and want of spiritual activity is very inexcusable in a Believer.* The ground of this inference is very clear, Jesus Christ is his life. Christ hath life enough in him, and he is willing enough to communicate more and more of this spiritual life: if the fountain of this life were a mere creature, something might be said for thy deadness and coldness; but now seeing Jesus Christ is thy life, thy deadness is inexcusable to thyself, and dishonorable to Christ. The life and greenness of the branches, is an honor to the root by which they live. Spiritual greenness and fruitfulness in a Believer is an honor to Jesus Christ, who is his life. Ps. 92. 12, 13, 14, 15. *The righteous shall flourish as a Palm-tree, &c. To shew that the Lord is upright, &c.* The fullness of Christ is manifested by the fruitfulness of a Christian

V. *It is the duty of a Christian to live comfortably on this Doctrine.* It affords very much comfort, (1.) *Against the weakness of this life in ourselves.* What Christian is there but finds this life very weak in him at times? but when it is weakest in thee, it is then strong in Jesus Christ: and God looks upon thy spiritual life, not only as it is in thee, but as it is in Christ. (2.) *Against the fear of wanting the ordinances of life.* 'Tis a great loss to lose the ordinances, Lev. 26. 31. but though thou lose these, yet thou dost not lose thy life: these are but the pipes, Christ is the olive-tree: these are but the channels, Christ is the fountain.

Man liveth not by bread alone, but by the word of blessing Thy soul liveth by Christ, not by ordinances; they are but the instrumental cause, Christ is the efficient. (3.) *Against the fear of Satan's workings to destroy this spiritual life.* 'Tis his great design to take away this spiritual life; he labors to stifle it by sin; he stirs up his instruments to remove the ordinances, but he cannot prevail; he must destroy Christ before he can destroy our life: he must wither the root, or he cannot kill the branches.

VI. *Let Believers be careful to carry themselves towards Christ as he who is their life.* (1.) Acknowledge him the author of your life. (2.) Go to him when you want life. (3.) Strengthen your union with him. Eph. 4. 15. (4.) Live to him who is your life, Rom. 14. 8.

VII. *It should invite all to lay hold on Christ.* All men are dead by nature. There's no other way to live a spiritual life. If Christ be not thy life of grace, he will never be thy life of glory.

SERMON III. COL. 3.—4.

"When Christ our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

I HAVE handled the first proposition, as it relates to the life of grace; viz, that Jesus Christ is a believers spiritual life. I shall now consider it as it refers to the life of glory, and so sum it up into this conclusion, viz.

Doct. *Jesus Christ is the eternal life of every Believer.* Christ is the everlasting life of all those that are eternally saved: as he is their life of grace, so he is also their life of glory. He is often called in Scripture not only a Saviour, but salvation. *The salvation of God*, Luk. 3. 6. *An horn of salvation*. Luk. 1. 69. And all because he is the salvation of all the elect. I must here put in that caution which I did before, viz. That the Father and Holy Ghost are not to be excluded; they are our life as well as Christ. The Spirit and the Father are Saviours as well as the Son. *Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*, Prophets, Acts 10. 43. Apostles, 1. Joh. 5. 11. Christ himself, Joh. 14. 16., do all bear witness to this truth, that Jesus Christ is life eternal to every true Believer. In what respect Christ is our life of glory, I shall shew in the following particulars.

I. *In regard of merit and acquisition.* Jesus Christ is the procurer of this life of glory. Heaven is called a purchased redemption, or possession, Eph. 1. 4. (*eis apolutrosin tes periporeseos*.) Jesus Christ is the purchaser of this possession, and his blood is the price of the purchase: as he hath by his death purchased the elect, so hath he also by his blood purchased this life for those redeemed ones, 1 Joh. 4. 9. *in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because he sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him.* Had not Jesus Christ shed his blood, no sinner had ever tasted of this life eternal. Eternal life is the free gift of God, and yet it is merited by Christ. Christ who is the price and meritorious cause of life, is the free gift of God's grace, and therefore our salvation is both free, and yet merited

II. *He is our life efficaciously.* Though salvation be purchased for the elect, yet must the elect of God be fitted and prepared for this salvation, before they can be put into the possession of it. The Apostle speaks of making the *soul meet for the inheritance of Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12. (*to ikanosanti emas.*) The best of men are unfit for, as well as unworthy of salvation. Though heaven be prepared for them, yet they cannot enter into heaven till they be prepared: this fitness or preparedness stands in the changing of our nature, by the working of grace in the heart, and in the merciful acceptation of God, in covering our infirmities, and reckoning our weak endeavors for perfect obedience. *Natura mentis humanæ quantumvis perfecta naturalibus donis, absque gratiâ non est susceptibilis gloriæ.* Parisiens. *lib. de virt. cap. 11.* The Apostle tells us that a man must be wrought for glory, 2 Cor. 5. 5. (*o de katergasamenos emas.*) The elect of God come into the world rough and unpolished, filthy and defiled, as well as others, and they are not fit for this life, till they are polished. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 15. 50. *Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of heaven,* Aquinas saith well, *Gratia hæc divina eò infunditur electis, ut peragant actiones ordinatas in finem vitæ eternæ.* Now Jesus Christ doth fit and work the elect for this glory. He doth by his Spirit change their nature, he doth by his grace renew the spirit of their mind; he doth set up his own Image in their souls, and by working grace, fit them for the enjoyment of that life of glory which he hath purchased.

III. *He is our life.* He is the fountain of our eternal glory 1 Joh. 5, 11. *This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* 'Tis in him as in the head, as in the root, as in the fountain, or spring; all our glory is laid up in Jesus Christ, as in a public treasury. Jesus Christ and all believers make up one mystical body, of which he is the head, and they the members, therefore is their glory laid up in him.

IV. *Jesus Christ is our life in regard of preparation.* As he doth prepare us for Heaven, so doth he prepare Heaven for us. This is attributed to his Ascension, Joh. 14. 2, 3. *I go to prepare a place for you.* Not as if the place of glory were not created till the Ascension of Christ: there were many souls in Heaven glorified before Christ did corporally ascend thither; *Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob,* and the Prophets; the meaning of it is only thus much, that Jesus Christ did not ascend merely for himself, but also for our sakes, in our stead and place to possess the purchased inheritance for us, and to keep it for us till we actually come to be possessed of it ourselves. 'Tis by way of allusion to the practices of great Kings, who send their harbingers before them, to make ready for them against their coming that Jesus Christ is pleased to stile himself so in reference to the elect; and therefore the Apostle calls him our forerunner, (*prodromos*,) and tells us that he is entered into the veil for us, Heb. 6. 20. and hence it is that we are said to *sit down together with Christ in heavenly places*, Eph. 2. 6.

V. *He is our life, as the way of life.* He calls himself the way, Joh. 14. 6. *No man comes to the Father but by Christ.* This is that new and living way which the Apostle mentions Heb. 10. 19, 20. 'Tis through the veil of Christ's flesh that we enter into the Holy of Holies. *Jacob* in his vision at *Bethel*, saw a ladder which reached from Heaven to Earth, Gen. 28. 12. *upon this ladder the Angels of God ascended and descended.* This ladder is Jesus Christ, so he tells us himself, Joh. 1. 51. hereafter ye shall see Heaven opened, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. He hath not only shewed us the way to Heaven by his example, but he is the way himself in which we go to God.

VI. *He is our life in regard of distribution and communication.* As he hath purchased life for us, and keeps possession of it for us, so it is he who shall put us into possession of it when we come to enjoy it. *I will come again and receive*

you unto myself, Joh. 14. 3. The Apostle speaks of this in Tim. 4. 8. There is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me in that day. 'Tis to be understood of Christ; he that hath purchased the Crown for us, will in that day visibly set it upon our head. Come ye blessed of my Father, receive the Kingdom, &c. Mat. 25. latter end.

VII. *He is our life formally.* Jesus Christ is the matter of eternal life. Our eternal life and glory stands in the full enjoyment of Jesus Christ in Heaven. The seeing of God, the enjoyment of Christ, is our very glory, Rev. 22. 3. 4. *The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his Servants shall serve him, and they shall see his Face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.* The glory of Heaven is called the eating of the tree of life, Rev. 2. 7. Jesus Christ is the tree of life, the enjoyment of him is the souls glory. Job therefore reckons up all his eternal glory by this very thing; *I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c. I shall behold him not with anothers, but with these very eyes.* Full and perfect is immediate communion with Christ, that is the life, the glory of the other world. Rev. 7. 17. *the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.* The whole felicity of glorified Saints, is held out in those expressions.

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *Away then with the Doctrine of eternal life by the merit of good works.* If Jesus Christ be our life, then cannot the merit of our works be our life or the cause of it, either in part or in whole, Christ and works are opposites as to this business of salvation. The affirming of Christ is the denial of works, and the affirming of works is the denial of Christ. Acts 4. 11, 12. *This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, &c. neither is salvation in any other; for there is no other name given under Heaven, &c.* And the truth is; all the things required to make a work meritorious, are wanting in the best of our good works. A meritorious work must be,

1. *Nostrum.* So are none of our good works, Eph. 2. 20.

2. *Perfectum.* So are not our works. *Our wine is mixed with water.* We halt upon our best legs, Isa. 64. 6. *Remember Lord my good deeds, and spare me,* was Nehemiah's prayer, Chap. 13. 22. we never did any thing we should do perfectly, not any one thing. Our most sublimated thoughts are full

of the dregs of earthly-mindedness, our best words are too scanty and light, &c.

3. It must be *indebitum*. A man cannot purchase your land by paying an old debt: all our obedience to God is an old debt which we owe upon another score. Remember that parable, Luk. 17. 9. *Doth he thank that servant because he did that which was commanded? I tell you no.* That which will not deserve thanks, cannot merit heaven. We are fallen into an erroneous age; man's will is cried up much. High Arminianism is within a few days journey of this piece of Popery. 'Tis time to give Antidotes when such deadly poison is scattered, and drank in by many judicious Christians. Let Papists make works their life, let Arminians make free-will their life, but let us make Christ our life. He that will not live by Christ solely, shall die for ever without Christ. I shall conclude this with that of the Apostle, Gal. 5. 4. *Christ is become of none effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace.*

II. *The certainty of the salvation of Believers.* They shall so certainly be saved, that Scripture speaks of their salvation as of a thing already done, 1 Cor. 1. 18. the preaching of the cross is unto us that are saved the power of God, (*tois sozomenois.*) 'Tis reported as a thing *done* not to be *done*, Eph. 2. 5. By Grace ye are saved, (*este sesosmenois.*) Rom. 8. 30. *Whom he justified, them he also glorified, (edoxase.)* He writes as if they were already in glory. All this to shew the certainty of their salvation. This depends on many things, upon this in the text for one—*If Christ be their life, they shall live.* He that will keep them out of Heaven, must first pluck Jesus Christ out of Heaven; *because I live, ye shall live also,* Joh. 14. 19. if the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed; if the Son be your life, ye shall live, and that for ever, in despite of Devil or corruption, he is able to save, (*eis panteles.*) Heb. 7. 25.

III. *Let this provoke all men to get an interest in Christ.* There's nothing but eternal death without him. *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,* 1 Joh. 5. 12. There's no way to glory but by him; deceive not yourselves, cling to him, lay fast hold on him, and on him alone: *Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ,* 1 Cor. 3. 11.

We hope we have an interest in Christ. Well, he that hath a good assurance that Christ is his for life, must have these three things, else he deceives himself.

1. *He must be a true believer in Christ, Joh. 3. 16. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, &c.*

2. *He must be an obedient subject to Christ.* Though we exclude obedience from the cause of salvation, yet we do make it a qualification of the person that shall be saved. Christ is the Author of eternal life unto them that obey him Heb. 5. 9. Christ will be King where-ever he is Saviour.

3 *He must live the life of Grace.* Christ is the Author of spiritual life, before he is the Author of life eternal. We must live in Christ, before we live with Christ. Christ must live in us, before we live with him. *Christ in you the hope of glory, Col. 1. 27.* if Christ be not in you a fountain of Grace, he will never be yours for glory.

4. *You that have Christ for life eternal, carry yourselves as those that believe this truth.* (1.) *Despair not.* No sin disparageth Christ so much as despair: there is more ground of hope and confidence in Christ, than there can be of distrust in ourselves. The sacrifice is sufficient for the guilt. Christ is (*antitutron.*) 1 Tim. 2. 6. a ransom, a full ransom. Let salvation be so much the more precious to you for his sake who is the Author of it. (3.) Attribute your salvation to Christ only. (4.) Live to Christ. (5.) *The greatness of God's love to the Elect.* He gave Christ to be their life, to die for them, Rom. 5. 8, 6. Live with Christ here as much as you can. (7.) The greatness of man's misery, he could not be saved without Christ.

SERMON IV. COL. 3.—4.

"When Christ our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

I HAVE handled the first proposition, that Jesus Christ is a believers life, both in regard of the life of grace, and of the life of glory. I proceed to the second,

Doct. *Jesus Christ who is a believers life, shall certainly appear.* There will be a manifest appearance of Jesus Christ.

The Scripture makes mention of a three-fold appearance of Christ.

I. *A bodily appearance in the flesh.* Thus Jesus Christ appeared in his Nativity, when in the fulness of time he took our nature in the womb of the Virgin, *Mary*. Of this the Apostle speaks, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *God manifested in the flesh.* Old *Simeon* in his song rejoiceth for this. Luk 2. 30, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy Word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* Venit ad homines.

II. *A spiritual appearance of Christ in the preaching of the Gospel.* Thus Jesus Christ was manifested to all that received the Gospel, and is still manifested. The Apostle speaks of this manifestation, Gal. 3. 1. *O foolish Galatians, &c. before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you.* And of this the Apostle makes mention 1 Joh. 1. 2. *The life was manifested, and we have seen it,* and 2 Tim. 1. 10. Neither of these appearances are to be understood in this Text, for it speaks of an appearance yet to be made. Therefore

III. *A glorious manifestation of Christ, yet to be made at his second coming to judgment.* And this is that appearance of which the Apostle here speaks: for then it shall be, and not till then, that the saints shall appear with Christ in glory. So the Apostle tells us, 2 Tim. 4. 8. *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me in that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.* 'Tis at this day of Christ's appearing, that the Saints shall be perfectly glorious. Having found out what is meant by Christ appearing, I shall in the prosecution of the Point, handle these five particulars.

I. That there shall be such an appearance of Christ.

II. Why Christ shall thus appear, the ends of this appearance.

III. After what manner Christ shall appear.

IV. When shall be the time of this appearance of Christ.

V. Why is it deferred.

I. *That Jesus Christ shall appear.* I shall evince this, (1.) *By many express testimonies of Scripture.* There is not any Article of our Faith more clearly set down in the Book of God

than this, Mat. 24. 30, *Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the Clouds of heaven.* Acts 1. 11, *This same Jesus which was taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.* The Apostle Paul asserts this truth in express terms, Heb. 9. 28, *Unto them that look for him, he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*¹ Joh. 3. 2, *When he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.* And as the Scripture doth expressly affirm it so. (2.) *God hath taught his people to wait and to pray for it,* Cant. 8. 8, *Come away my beloved,* &c. Rev. 22. 20, *The last prayer of the Church is for this very thing, Even so come Lord Jesus.* And, Luk. 12. 35. 36 they are commanded to wait for this appearance. *Let your loins be girded, and your lamps burning; and yourselves like unto men, that wait for their Lord, &c.* God never commanded his people to pray and wait for a fiction or dream which shall never come to pass. (3.) *From the absurdities which would follow upon the denial of it.* We may say of this as the Apostle saith of the denial of the resurrection of the body, 1 Cor. 15. 17, 18, 19. *If Christ should not appear, our faith would be in vain; the dead in Christ were perished; and we should only have hope in Christ in this life, and of all men should be most miserable.* The whole comfort of a Christian turns upon the hinge of this Doctrine of Christ's appearing, Joh. 14. 18.

II. *The ends of Christ's appearing are, such as these.* (1.) *To declare that sin is abolished.* This is the meaning of that, Heb. 9. 28. (2.) *That he may be admired in his Saints, &c.* This end of his coming the Apostle sets down, 2 Thes. 1. 10 *he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.* One end of the second coming of Jesus Christ, is to communicate his glory to his Saints that have believed in him; he shall put his glory upon them, and so shall be glorified in them. Jesus Christ is glorified in his Saints now; that holiness and grace which he hath communicated to them already, doth render them very glorious: but at his second coming his glory will shine in them with still greater splendor. He will then communicate unto them all his glory, and make them glorious, as he is glorious. Our Saviour mentions this, Joh. 14. 3. *I will come again, and receive you unto myself.* He comes to fetch all his elect to Heaven, and to reveal his glory both to their souls and

bodies. He shall then actually put soul and body into the full possession of that glorious redemption which he hath purchased for them. 'Tis called *the day of redemption*, Luk. 21. 28.

III. *To execute the sentence of his wrath upon all his enemies, and the enemies of his people.* Jesus Christ hath severely threatened all wicked men, that he will visibly take vengeance on them, for the dishonors they have done to him, and the wrongs they have done to his people; and in this second manifestation of himself, he will put all those threatenings into execution. Of this the Apostle speaks, 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8, 9. *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, &c.* And of this *Enoch* prophesied long ago, Jude 14. *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand Saints to execute judgment on all, &c.* Wicked men are now secure, they reproach God and wrong his people; but Jesus Christ will one day visibly come from Heaven to punish these contempts and injuries. The evil Angels, and sinful men shall then be publicly adjudged to suffer that torment which they have deserved.

IV. *To put an end to his Churches sufferings.* Rev. 20. 10. *Then shall the Devil that deceived the World be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

V. *To gather together his elect.* This the Evangelist sets down, Mat. 24. 30, 31. *They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. And he shall send his Angels, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, &c.* The elect of God are scattered up and down in the several quarters of the World, scarcely two or three of them are now together in one family at the same time; but then they shall be collected, never to part asunder to all eternity.

3. What manner of appearing this shall be. Consider for that these four things.

1. *It shall be a real and corporal appearance.* Christ shall not appear imaginarily, as some have thought, nor shall he only appear according to his Divine Nature, but he shall appear bodily and truly: the same human nature which was in the grave, and afterwards ascended into Heaven, shall descend from Heaven, Mat. 24. 30. *Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man.* The humanity shall appear; so the Angels told the Disciples at his Ascension, Acts 1. 11. *This same Jesus*

which is taken into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven. As he did really and bodily ascend, so shall he really and corporally descend. God will honor the Human Nature of Christ in the World. They shall look upon him whom they have pierced. The same flesh of Christ which was pierced, shall be manifested in his second coming.

2. *It shall be a sudden appearing.* His coming is compared to a sudden flash of lightning, Mat. 24. 27. The appearance of Christ is compared to the lightning in two respects. - (1.) *For the evidence of it.* It shall be as clear to the eyes of men as lightning. (2.) *For the suddenness of it.* A flash of lightning doth suddenly break forth, and in an instant shines from one end of the Heaven to another, so shall the appearance of Christ be. And for this very cause is it compared to the coming of a thief in the night, Luk. 12. 39. 40. *As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be when the Son of Man cometh, they ate, they drank, &c. Mat. 24. 37. when men say peace, &c.*

III. *It shall be a very glorious appearance.* He shall come with power and great glory, Mat. 24. 30. He was not so mean and despicable in his first coming, as he shall be majestic and renowned in this his second coming. His first appearance was in the form of a Servant. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. A low kind of appearance was most fit for such work; but when he appears again, he shall come as a Judge, as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; therefore Majesty is fit for him. The Scripture doth set out the glory of his coming sundry ways. (1.) He shall come in the clouds of Heaven. The bright cloud shall be his chariot, Mat. 24. 30. (2.) He shall come attended with an innumerable company of glorious Angels. Those glorious spirits shall come in full regiments attending upon his person to do him service, and to execute his will, Mat. 25. 31. He had the beasts to attend on him at his first coming; but he shall have Angels to wait upon him at this coming. (3.) He shall come with the voice of the Archangel, with a mighty shout, and with the trumpet of God, 2 Thes. 4, 16. All these expressions are used to set out the glory of it. All outward glory which ever man beheld, is but darkness in this respect.

IV *It shall be a very dreadful and terrible appearance.* Full of Majesty, and therefore full of terror. His first coming was dreadful, Mat. 4. 5. The Scripture sets out the

dreadfulness of it by its Antecedents, Concomitants, and Consequents. The Antecedents are in Mat. 24. 29. such an alteration shall be made upon the creatures in being, that Sun, Moon and Stars obscured by the glory of Christ, shall cease from their service, and not be able to shew their glory as before. The Concomitants, the firing of the world. The Apostle speaks of this, 2 Pet. 3. 10. what a dreadful sight will this be to the wicked? The consequents of it are, the raising of the dead, the setting up of the Thrones, the summoning of all the world to Judgment; well doth the Scripture call it the terrible day of the Lord.

IV. *When shall this appearing be?* you cannot imagine that I should be so bold as to say any thing of the particular day, month, or year of Christ's coming. Our Saviour hath for ever silenced all curious enquirers about it, Mar. 13. 32. The Scripture tells us thus much about the time of it; that it shall be when the time of the Churches tribulation is ended, Mat. 24. 29. When the number of God's elect is converted. In the end of days, Dan. 12. 13. It is one of those *Novissima*, or last things, which is to be expected in the world.

V. *Why is it deferred?* (1.) *Because the elect of God are not yet called.* All the vessels of glory are not born into the world. Christ stays till these flowers be sprung up. The fetching of these to Heaven is one end of his coming; and he will not come till these are brought forth. As the world was made at first, so doth it stand and continue for their sakes. (2.) *That space and time for repentance may be afforded unto sinful men.* This reason the Apostle renders of it, 2 Pet. 3. 9. *The Lord is not slack, &c. but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* He defers his coming, that sinners may have more tenders of salvation made to them; that so they may be inexcusable, if they do not return. (3) *That the Faith, Hope, and Patience of his own Children may be exercised* The delaying of Christ's coming is a very great help both to exercise Faith, Watchfulness and Patience. We may say of this, as the Prophet doth of the delaying of another day of the Lord, Hab. 2. 4. *Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry, and the just shall live by his faith.* (4.) *That all other of God's decrees for, and about the things which must come to pass before this day, may be accomplished.* Many things God hath decreed shall be done

before his appearance, which are not yet done in the world. The preaching of the Gospel to all Nations, Mat. 24. 14. The overthrowing of Anti-christ, 2 Thes. 2, 3, 8. The making of the Jews and Gentiles into one Church, &c. Christ stays because these decrees must be accomplished.

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *Away with those Atheists, and Epicures, who deny this Doctrine.* In the very days of the Apostles, there were some scoffers, that mocked at this Doctrine of Christ's appearing. 2 Pet. 3, 3, 4. *Where is the promise of his coming?* we have many such scoffers in our days, that deride the Doctrine of the Resurrection of eternal life, of Christ's second coming. The Apostle tells us the reason of this scoffing in the same place. (1.) *The impurity of their hearts.* They walk after their own lusts: that's one great ground of Atheistical and wicked opinions. Such Doctrines curb and check their lusts, and because they cannot have their lusts by retaining such Doctrines; they therefore reject and scoff at them. (2.) *They walk more by sense, than by the testimony of the word of God.* Since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation; because they cannot apprehend with their sense any such Doctrine, or any ground of it, therefore they reject it; such as these who will not be convinced by Scripture, we shall leave to feel the severity of that coming, which they will not believe. They that now scoff, will have time enough sadly to bewail their scoffing, they shall then feel what they will not now be persuaded to believe.

II. *The dear love of Jesus Christ to his people.* As his departure was a rich testimony of his love; 'tis expedient for you that I go away; so is his returning; I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you, Joh. 14. 18. Never think of Christ's returning, but meditate upon the greatness of his love.

III. *That Christ is not now corporally in the world.* The Scripture speaks of his corporal appearance as of a future thing. The Papists make him corporally present in the Sacrament. His body shall descend but once, and that shall never be till he come to take his people into glory with himself. The Doctrine of the real corporal presence of Christ is a real falsehood.

IV. *This is a very sad Doctrine to all ungodly sinners.* Christ shall appear. It were well for wicked men, if this Doctrine were an untruth. The very end of his appearing is to bring you to a public trial, for all your acts of High-treason against his Crown and Dignity. He will appear, and then you shall appear before him, to render an account of, and to suffer punishment for all your hard words and cruel actings against him, and against his in the world; when he appears you shall wish that the mountains might fall upon you to hide you from his sight. The appearance of Christ to you, will be as the appearance of a severe Judge to a convicted malefactor: consider of it before-hand, that by timely and thorough repentance, you may prevent that dreadful sentence, which will be denounced and executed upon the wicked in that day. *Felix* trembled when he heard this Doctrine, Acts 24. 25. (*emphobos genomenos.*) If the hearing of it work such fear, how great fear will the sight of it work? be humbled and converted, that ye may stand when the Son of Man appears. You cannot hide any wickedness from him; you cannot bribe him to excuse your wickedness.

V. *Let the friends and favorites of Christ draw comfort from hence.* Lift up your heads, saith our Saviour, when he is preaching of this very Doctrine, Luk. 21. 28. (*anakupsate, eparrate tas kephalas umon.*) 'Tis a day of lifting up the head to you: think of it, and gather comfort from it. (1.) Against all the shame you meet with here. That day shall wipe off all your shame, Isa. 66. 5. (2.) Against all false judgments and accusations. In that day all shall be judged over again: Christ shall appear, and he will judge righteous judgment. (3.) Against all slanders. (4.) The appearing of Christ is a general Antidote against all evils you suffer, 2 Pet. 2, 9. Believe it, meditate much upon it, Mark 13. 35. Luk. 12. 42. (5.) Prepare for it.

SERMON V. JOHN 6.—55.

“My Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed.”

IN this Chapter we have something Historical and something Doctrinal. The Historical part relates two great miracles done by our Saviour; his feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, v. 1. to 15.; his walking upon the

water, *v.* 15. to 22. The Doctrinal part is from *v.* 22. to end. The first and principle Doctrine he handles, is to prove himself to be the bread of life. He is occasioned to preach this Doctrine from the people flocking after him to be fed with miraculous bread, *v.* 22, 23, 24, 25. seeing a great multitude resort after him to *Capernaum*, he knowing their intentions, tells them, *v.* 26. that they followed, not because they saw his Divine Power in the late miracle, but that they might satisfy their natural appetite with bread, and thereupon *v.* 27. adviseth them that they would mind that spiritual bread, which did excel the other, as far as the soul did the body, *v.* 27.; and after some debate with them, when he saw their hearts a little raised after it, he doth openly declare and profess himself to be that spiritual bread; and when there was some contention among the Jews how he could give them himself to eat, *v.* 52. he doth, *v.* 53. shew the misery of them that did not eat him, and *v.* 54. the happiness of those that did feed upon him; and thereupon lays down this assertion in the Text, *For my flesh is meat indeed, &c.* The words (taken absolutely, and excluding the casual particle *for*) contain in them a double Proposition.

1. That Christ's flesh is meat indeed.

2. That his blood is drink indeed.

I begin with the first. *My flesh, &c.* in which we have, (1.) The subject, *My flesh*, (2.) The predicate, *Meat indeed*.

EXPLICATION.

My flesh. Flesh when it is spoken in relation to Christ, as here in the Text, signifies two things. (1.) Sometimes the Manhood alone. So you have it, *Joh. 6. 63. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.* In this place the flesh signifies only the Humanity of Christ. So *Austin* expounds it, and *Calvin* after him. The humanity is without advantage, if it be separated from the Spirit, that is, *à spiritus virtute, quod perfusa est caro.* *Calvin.* 'Tis the Divinity that gives efficacy to the Humanity. It is from the Spirit that the flesh hath any feeding virtue. (2.) Sometimes the whole person of Christ, God-man. And so it is to be understood in the Text, *My flesh is meat*, that is, *I am meat.* I, God and man in one person. Now why flesh is mentioned here, *Cameron* gives the reason; because our life is in the flesh and blood of Christ. *Si enim carnem and san-*

guinem Christo tollas, non erit amplius cibus noster. For that he might be food for our souls, it was necessary that he should satisfy the justice of God, and so purchase for us remission of sins. Therefore, because by the shedding of his blood, and by the sacrificing and offering up of his body upon the cross, he purchased this for us, Heb. 9. 22. his flesh is said to be our meat, and his blood our drink.

Is meat, (Brosis.) This word is sometimes translated *rust*, Mat. 6. 19, 20. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, (opou ses kai brosis aphanizei,) but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, (opou oute ses oute brosis aphanizei.)* It signifies any thing that by rust or fretting doth eat into metal or other substances, and so consumes them. It is also translated *meat*, and signifies generally all kind of food which is for the support of life, 2 Cor. 9. 10. *He that ministereth seed to the sower; both minister bread to your food, (arton eis brosin,) and multiply your seed sown, &c.* And so 'tis used in the Text. *Indeed, (alethos,)* the flesh of Christ is called meat indeed, in a two-fold respect.

(1.) *In respect of all other food.* All other food in respect of this, is but *cibi tatummodo umbra et vana imago*, as *Cameron* saith. As natural life in respect of the spiritual, is but a shadow of life; so the meat that is appointed for the natural life, if compared with the meat of the spiritual life, is but the very image of meat. Christ's flesh is real meat.

(2.) *In respect of that typical meat which the Jews had lately spoken of, v. 31. Our Fathers did eat Manna in the desert, &c.* Our Saviour tells them that this is but typical bread, but his flesh is bread indeed; it is the real substance of that which was but a meer type and shadow. Thus for explication. The observation is this.

Doct. 1. *That the Lord Jesus Christ is really and truly the food and meat of Believers.* Flesh is here put for the whole person of Christ. Jesus Christ as he is held out in the Scriptures, is the true, real, and very meat of believing Christians; Christ as he is propounded in the Gospel, dead, broken, crucified. Christ in all his perfection, completeness, fulness, is *meat indeed* to a true Believer: 'tis the very scope of this Sermon, from v. 27. to 59., in which this truth is inculcated over and over again, and all objections answered, which the carnal reason, and unbelief of man's heart can make against it.

I shall in the explication of this Doctrine open these things. (1.) Prove that Christ is a Believers meat. (2.) Shew the Analogy between Christ and other meat. (3.) How this meat is eaten and received.

1. That Christ is the souls meat; this is proved two ways.

First, *From the types of Christ in the Old Testament.* The ceremonial law had many types of Christ. Whatsoever is revealed of Christ in the New Testament, was some way or other typified of him in the ceremonial law. There are four types which did set out Jesus Christ as the souls meat.

1. *The Manna in the Wilderness.* The history of the Manna is set down, Exod. 16. the people being in some want of provision in the wilderness of *sin*, began to murmur against *Moses* and *Aaron*, v. 3. God promiseth, v. 4. to rain bread from heaven for them, which accordingly was done, v. 14. 15. That this was a type of the feeding virtue of Christ, is plainly discovered by our Saviour in this very Sermon, v. 31. 32. The wilderness did typify the state of the Church in this world, and the Manna was a plain type of Christ the Churches meat.

2. *The shew-bread.* The law and manner of the shew-bread you have at large, Lev. 24. 5, 6, 7, 8, 8. There are two things represented by this shew-bread. First the multitude of the faithful, presented unto God in his Church, as upon a pure table, continually serving him: made by faith and holiness, as fine cakes; and by the mediation of Christ, as by incense, made a sweet odour unto God. Secondly, the spiritual repast which the Church hath from and before God, who feedeth them with Christ the bread of life.

3. *The meat-offerings.* Concerning this *Mincha* or meat-offerings, you may read at large, Lev. 2. 1, &c. These meat-offerings were of two sorts; some were the meat-offerings of the Congregation, some of particular persons; of these latter there were several sorts mentioned in that Chapter. It is said, v. 3. that *Aaron* and his Sons shall have the remnant of the meat-offering, that is, all of it, but that which is burned upon the Altar for a memorial, v. 2. Several things were signified by the meat-offerings; being referred to Christ, (who by the oblation of his own body, was our meat-offering, Psl. 40. 6. Heb. 10. 5.) they did shadow out our communion with Christ. and participation of his death, and resurrection by faith, whereby he becomes unto us spiritual meat, of which the whole Church is made partaker.

4. *The flesh of the sacrifices of the peace-offerings*, and others which were given to the Priests, of which you read, Lev. 7. 15., they were to be eaten the same day they were killed. Now what was meant by the eating of the flesh of these sacrifices, and of the flesh of the other sacrifices which were given to the Priests to eat, Deut. 10. 12, 13, 14. Surely Jesus Christ, who by his flesh, as by precious meat, feedeth his people who are spiritual Priests, unto everlasting life.

Secondly, *From the sacraments of nourishment both of the Old and New Testament*. There were sacraments of implantion, or initiation, and of growth; under the law, circumcision, and the passover; under the gospel, baptism, and the supper of the Lord.

1 The sacrament of nourishment under the Old Testament, was the Paschal Lamb. The law and rites of this are set down, Exod. 12. 3, 4, 5, &c. What did this Paschal Lamb signify, but Jesus Christ our passover, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world? In this sacrament was Jesus Christ set out as our nourisher; he is that precious meat, upon which all the true Israel of God feed continually, who is therefore called our passover, 1 Cor. 5. 7.

2. *The Lord's supper*. This is the sacrament of nourishment under the New Testament. And herein Christ clearly is exhibited as our spiritual meat; his flesh is the bread, the wine is his blood. As the body is nourished by bread and wine, so is the soul, by his body and blood, nourished and fed to life eternal.

II. The Analogy between Christ and corporal meat, stands in these three particulars. Three great ends of meat.

1. *Corporal meat is for the preservation of the natural life*. The natural life is maintained by meat, through the concurrence of God's blessing: 'tis *pabulum vitæ*. Hence bread, under which all other provision is comprehended, is called the *staff of life*, Isa. 3. 1. Keep the strongest man from meat but a few days, and the life will extinguish and go out, 1 Sam. 30. 12. Jesus Christ is the maintainer and preserver of spiritual life; as he gives it at first, so he upholds it: 'tis by continual influences from him, that the life is kept from expiring; if he withdraw his influx ever so little, the soul is at the giving up of the Ghost, even half dead.

2. *Corporal meat is good for growth*. 'Tis by meat that the body is brought from infancy to child-hood, from child-

hood to youth, from youth to a perfect man. Jesus Christ is he that carries on a Christian from infancy to perfection. All the souls growth and increase is from Christ. So the Apostle, Col. 2. 19. *From him the whole body having nourishment ministered, &c.* The branches live and increase by virtue of the sap which is derived from the root. Christians grow by virtue of the sap which is to them derived from Jesus Christ. Every part grows by Christ.

3. *Meat is a repairer of natures decays.* When by some violent sickness the spirits are consumed, the body wasted, the strength lost; meat fitly and seasonably taken, helps, through the divine blessing, to recall all again, 1 Sam. 30. 12 his spirit came to him again. Jesus Christ is the repairer of the souls decays. Sometimes a Believer through the neglect of his duty, or through surfeiting upon sin, brings spiritual languishings upon himself, his strength is decayed, his vigour is abated, his pulse beats very weakly, he can scarcely creep in the ways of God. In such a case Jesus Christ recovers him, repairs his breaches, and renews his strength, as in former times. The *Psalmist* speaks of this, Ps. 23. 3. *He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his names sake.* The Saints have every day experience of this restoring virtue of Christ.

III. How this meat is eaten and received. The Scripture makes mention of three things which concur to this act.

1. *The ordinances.* These are the conduits, Jesus Christ hath instituted and appointed his ordinances, to be the means of carrying his nourishing virtue to the soul. The ordinances are the dishes of gold, upon which this heavenly meat is brought. Prayer, Reading, Preaching, Meditation, Holy-conference, the Sacrament; in these Christ presents himself to the soul. He that forsakes these, can expect no feeding from Christ. *In this mountain will the Lord of Hosts make a feast of fat things, &c.* Isa. 25. 6. The feast is made in the mountain of God's house, and the ordinances are the dishes on which this meat is set, and the knives by which its carved out to the soul.

2. *Saving lively faith.* This is the instrument. What the hand, mouth, and stomach are in the corporal eating, that is, faith in this spiritual eating. Faith is the *hand* that takes this meat, the *mouth* that eats it, and the *stomach* that digests it. Yea, faith is as the veins and arteries that do

disperse and carry this nourishment to every power of the soul; this is abundantly cleared in this very Chapter, v. 35. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, he that believeth in me shall never thirst.* Cometh is expounded by believeth. Eating and drinking are here put for believing. *Crede et manducasti.* He that believes eats, and he that eats not, it is because he believes not; *Hic edere est credere.*

Doct. II. *That the blood of Jesus Christ is drink indeed.* Blood is here put for the whole person, as flesh was; and its rather *his blood* is drink, than *he* is drink; because the great efficacy of all Christ did, lies principally in his blood, Heb. 9. 22. And in the same respects, as his flesh is said to be meat *indeed*, his blood is said to be drink *indeed*. And those three things which concur to the act of eating his flesh, concur also to this act of drinking his blood. The mystical union, saving faith and the ordinances. I shall therefore only open two things.

1. Shew that Christ's blood is drink.

2. The Analogy between his blood and other drink.

I. That the blood of Christ is spiritual drink, will appear:

1. *From the drink-offerings under the law.* In the law there were sundry drink-offerings appointed as well as meat-offerings. The daily sacrifice which was to be offered continually, every morning and evening, had both a meat and drink offering annexed to it, Exod. 29. 40, 41. The daily sacrifice did signify three things.

(1.) That Jesus Christ the true Lamb of God was available to the Church of God, from the morning of the world, to the evening, 'the end of the world.'

(2.) To signify the continual need the Church had of reconciliation by Christ's blood, which taketh away sin.

(3.) To sanctify the morning and evening prayers of the Church, by the interceding sacrifices of Christ the Mediator. And the meat-offering, and drink-offering added thereunto, did signify, that Jesus Christ by offering himself to God, becomes not only our redemption, but also meat and drink to the soul. The sheaf of the first-fruits appointed to be offered every year, had both the meat-offering, and drink-offering added thereunto, Lev. 23. 10, 11, 12, 13. The like is to be observed in other sacrifices. Now as the meat-offerings did represent Christ as food, so the drink-offerings did set him out as our spiritual drink.

2. *From the water issuing out of the rock.* You read the story of that, Num. 20. The people in the desert of *Zin*, wanted water; in their necessity, as their custom was, they fell a murmuring, v. 3, 4, 5. God commands *Moses*, v. 8. to speak unto the rock to give them water, that they and their cattle might drink: *Moses smites the rock twice*, (which was his sin, because God had only commanded him to *speak* to the rock,) and it gave forth its waters in abundance, v. 11. Now what the meaning of this water was, the Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 10. 4. *They drank of the rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ; The rock typified Christ, and the water of the rock, of which they and their cattle drank, typed out the blood of Christ our spiritual drink.*

3. *From the cup in the Lord's supper.* Why is the cup added to the bread? is it not to let us know, that Jesus Christ is spiritual drink, as well as spiritual bread.

4. *From the resemblance of the vine.* Our Saviour in Joh. 15. is compared to a vine. Why to a vine?

[1.] To shew the great mystery of the union of all the spiritual branches with him, the root.

[2.] To signify that he is our spiritual drink. The vine doth yield wine, which is drink for the body. The Lord Jesus Christ doth yield spiritual drink, for all those that are his members; he is the wine of God, as well as the bread of God.

II. *Quæ Analogia?* The Analogy stands in these four things. There are four properties of drink distinct from meat.

1. *Drink is for refreshing and cooling.* When the body is hot by labor, sickness, or travel, drink doth cool and refresh it. *The Hart panteth after the water-brooks*, Ps. 42. 1. The chased hart when he is heated with hunting, makes to the river, and by drinking is refreshed. The sweating traveller goes to the spring and cools himself, by drinking of the streaming waters. The blood of Jesus Christ is of a very refreshing and cooling nature; when the soul is heated with temptations, parched with the fiery wrath of God in the conscience, when it lies sweating and swealtring under guilt, one draught of Christ's blood, taken down by faith, yea one drop of it sensibly falling upon it, doth cool and refresh it again. Hence he is also compared to the rivers of waters in dry places, Isa. 23. 2. Hence is that invitation, Mat. 11. 28.

I will give you rest, (anapauso,) I will give you refreshment, so 'tis translated, Philemon 7. (ta splanchna ton agion anapepautai) nothing indeed can cool the parched soul but Christ's blood and this will do it abundantly when 'tis quite melted with wrath, and burnt up with anguish.

2. *Drink cleanseth the body.* The inward parts are washed and purified as well as refreshed. As the running water cleanseth the channel, and carries away rubbish and filth, so drink seasonably and fitly taken, carries away the defilements that are contracted within the body. The blood of Christ is of a cleansing nature, 'tis indeed the only cleanser; it doth, being taken by faith, carry away all the filthiness of the inward man. All the ceremonial purifications were types of the purifying blood of Christ, Heb. 9. 13, 14. there you have the typical cleansings expounded. *The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin*, 1 Joh. 1. 7. Christ takes away the guilt of sin by justification, and he cleanseth us from the filthiness of sin by sanctification. You read in Zech. 13. 1. *of a fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness.* This fountain is nothing else but the fountain of Christ's blood; he that drinks daily of this blood, shall be cleansed daily.

3. *Drink is of a reviving nature.* It recovers from faintings, it opens the eyes, helps feebleness of spirit, Jud. 15. 18, 19. *Sampson* being tired by the great slaughter of the *Philistines*, found his spirits sink, he prays for drink, and when he had refreshed himself with water, his spirit came again, and he revived. *Solomon*, Prov. 31. 6, 7. prescribes *strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to the heavy hearted, that they may forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more.* Some drink is called *Aqua-vitæ*, because of its usefulness and efficacy this way. The blood of Jesus Christ is a reviving blood; when the soul is in *deliquio spirituali*, when it faints, and dies, and sinks, the sprinklings of this blood will fetch it again, a drop or two of this true *Aqua-vitæ* taken down by faith, will open the eyes and restore it again: this effect it had on *Asaph*, Ps. 37. 26. *My heart and my flesh faileth, &c. but thou art the stay of my heart, and my portion for ever.* This was foretold of Christ long before his birth, by that Evangelical Prophet, Isa. 61. 1. and Chap. 57. 15. *To revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* It is his blood, and that alone, that healeth the broken in heart.

A. Drink is of a cheering nature. It doth beget and continue cheerfulness. The Psalmist tells us, that *wine maketh glad the heart of Man*, Ps. 104. 15. The blood of Christ is a heart-cheering thing; it's the only foundation, and the only preserver of true joy, it will make the heart merry in adversity, it will create laughter in heaviness, Ps. 4. 6, 7. *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance, &c. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, &c.* The light of God's countenance is lifted up only in, and through Jesus Christ. Christ's blood is the only medicine for spiritual melancholy. When the Church was drinking in Christ's wine-cellar, taking down this blood, how was her heart cheered? Cant. 2. 3, 4. *I sat down under his shadow, &c.*

THE USES OF THIS ARE,

1. For information in these particulars,

1. *Take notice of the great mystery of a Believers union, and one-ness with Jesus Christ.* The Scripture sets this out, as by express testimonies, so by natural resemblances, as of vine and branches, Joh. 15. *init.* head and members, Eph. 1. 1. Eph. 5. 30. of husband and wife, Eph. 6. 32. of the foundation and superstructure stones, Eph. 3. 20, 21. and of meat and eaters, as in the Text. As there is a union between the meat, and the body of him that eats it, so there is an intimate union between a Believer, and Christ his spiritual meat, and indeed our union with him is the foundation of our feeding on him; he could not be our meat, if he were not our head by *mystical union*. This is the foundation of this eating; this makes Christ ours, gives us right to eat. The Apostle, Col 2. 19. makes our union with him, the foundation of our receiving nourishment from him and the soul's feeding on him, proves the soul's union with him; so it follows, v. 56. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* As the meat which we eat is turned into the substance of our body, so we are turned into Christ, *made flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.*

II. *Behold here the fulness of Christ.* Whence shall we have bread in the wilderness to satisfy so many? said the Disciples to Christ, Mar. 8. 4. 5. The fulness of Christ appears in this, that he hath enough in him to feed so many, and to feed every one so plentifully; he hath fed his people ever since that promise, Gen. 3. 15. and he will feed all his elect to the end of the world, and he will feed them all

abundantly every way; he feeds them with grace, and knowledge, feeds them in respect of justification, and of sanctification, &c. and yet there is no abatement of his fulness. Did not *the fulness of the God-head dwell bodily in him?* Col. 2. 9. He could not feed so many, and so long every way, without any diminution of his fulness; the Children have been eating above five thousand years, and the loaf is still whole.

III. *Behold the great love of Christ, and of the Father, in giving us this meat and drink.* Remember, 'tis his flesh that is our meat, his blood our drink: he could not have been our meat and drink, had he not been sacrificed; the Priests were not allowed to eat of the offerings until they were sacrificed, had not Christ been sacrificed, he could have been no food for us. The love of Christ and the Father appears the more, that the Son should be sacrificed as a meat-offering, and his blood let out as a drink-offering for us; wonder to eternity at this love, Joh. 3. 16. the Scripture expresses the great love of God to the *Israelites*, that he gave them Manna from Heaven, Psl. 78, 23, 24, 25. How much greater love doth he express, in giving his Son to the elect to feed them? That God's only Son should be torn in pieces to be meat and drink for us. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, as to feed us with the body and blood of his own Son!

IV. *Behold here the completeness of Christ.* The Scripture speaks much of his completeness and perfection. Look upon him in what respect, under what notion you please, and you shall see his completeness. Behold him as a Saviour, and so he is complete; he saves (*eis to panteles.*) Heb. 7. 25. He saves the soul and body, from all evil, unto all good, and that for ever. Consider him as a *Physician*, and his completeness will appear; he heals the soul and body, heals in an instant, heals to the bottom, &c.; whatsoever he is compared to, he is completely and perfectly so. Behold him as a *Feeder* and he is complete in that notion; he is not only meat, not only drink, but both meat and drink, complete nourishment. The body cannot live with meat, if drink be wanting; nor can it subsist by drink only without meat. Bread without drink, would dry up the blood; drink without meat would, in a little time drown the body; a mixture, and fit proportion of both, keeps it in health, Jesus Christ is both these, complete and perfect nourishment. Well may the Apostle

say, that Christians are complete in him, Col. 2. 10. (*este en auto pepleromenoi.*) He is in himself every way complete, and those that adhere to him, are perfectly complete in him.

V. *Take notice of the truth of Christ's humanity. Marcion, Eutiches, Saturnius, Maniches*, hold that Christ was man only in appearance. The Scripture doth both assert the God-head and man-hood of Christ; the two natures are personally united, never to be separated. *His name shall be called Emmanuel*, Mat. 1. 23. And the truth of the man-hood is asserted in many places, *The word became flesh, and dwelt among us*, Joh. 1. 14. *To us a Child is born*, Isa. 9. 6. as other Scriptures, so the text doth clearly assert his humanity, for it makes mention of his flesh and blood. The God-head hath neither flesh nor blood, but the man-hood hath both; he is perfect God, and perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting.

VI. *How injurious are the Papists to the people of God, who deny them his blood?* They take away from the Laity (as they call them) the blood of Christ in the Sacrament, and by this means in effect deny them nourishment. As the body stands in need of meat as well as drink, and of drink as well as meat, so doth the soul. As they wrong Christ in transgressing his institution, who appointed the cup as well as the bread, Mat. 26. 26, 27. So they are very injurious to the Church, in taking away one half of their spiritual food; abhor their Doctrines, and bless God that you are freed from those sacrilegious soul-robbers; they that deprive you of Christ's blood, deprive you of life, for *except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*, Joh. 6. 53. yea indeed, he that takes away Christ's blood, takes away all Christ from the soul.

VII. *The wickedness of the Socinian Doctrine that makes nothing which Christ did, meritorious for us, but only exemplary.* This is a soul-damning Doctrine. Christ is *our meat and drink*; he died not only to teach us to suffer, but to be meat and drink to keep us from starving, yea, to feed us to eternal life.

VIII. *The miserable condition of those that want Christ.* Nothing can keep them from starving, who either have not, or will not use this meat and drink. The condition of *Lazarus* was sad to his outward man, when he had neither meat nor drink, Luk. 16. *Hagar* and her child were in a miserable condition, when the bread was eaten and the bo

empty, Gen. 21. 15, 16. The condition of that desolate widow of *Sarepta*, 1 Kings 17. 11, 12. was very sad; far worse is theirs who want Christ: the starving of the soul is worse than the pining of the body.

IX. *None fare so delicately as Believers.* That rich glutton *fares deliciously every day*, Luk. 16. 19. What were his delicacies to this? He had the creatures to feed upon; Believers feed on God himself. *Nabal* when he had his sheap-shearers, made a *feast like the feast of a King*, 1 Sam. 25. 36. You read of *Ahasuerus'* great feast, Esth. 1. 4, 5. and of *Solomon's* daily provision, 1 Kings 4. 22, 23. these were very great, but the believing beggar had better provision than this. What is the flesh of fowls to the flesh of Christ? What is the blood of the grape to Christ's blood? This is a Believers daily food; they have not only *panem & potum Domini*, but they have the Lord for meat and drink.

X. *The folly of those that either feed themselves, or persuade others to feed upon their own works and duties.* The Papists set works and duties before themselves, and others, as their spiritual meat and drink; they make the righteousness of man their meat and drink.

(1.) *This Doctrine is derogatory to Christ.* To make any thing besides Christ, the souls meat and drink, is to deny him to be meat, at least sufficient and perfect meat; he will be our only food, or not our food at all. Christ is incapable of all other mixtures. As the Apostle argues about grace and works, so may we argue about Christ and works, Rom. 11. 6. *If by grace, then it is no more of works, &c.* If Christ be our meat and drink, then are not works our meat and drink, otherwise Christ is no more Christ; and if works be our meat and drink, then is not Christ our meat and drink, otherwise works are no more works.

(2.) *This Doctrine is prejudicial to the soul.* It is indeed a soul-starving Doctrine. Our works cannot feed us. The Prophet tells us, Isa. 44. 20. *That the idolater feedeth on ashes.* Our best works and duties, are not meat and drink, but ashes. 'Tis as impossible that the body should live upon ashes, or other such trash, as that the soul should live upon its own works. Our works have not nourishing virtue in them. *If a Son should ask bread, saith our Saviour, of any of you that is a Father, will he give him a stone?* Luk. 11. 11, 12. The Papists are unnatural Fathers to their Children.

When they ask bread, they give them a stone, when they ask flesh, they give a serpent, and when they ask an egg, they give them a scorpion. A man's best works are stones, serpents, scorpions; yea, they are poison to him that maketh them his food. You read of a severe threatening of *Rabshakeh*, against the people of God, 2 Kings 18. 27. *He would make them eat their own dung, &c.* The papists put this threatening into practice upon all their followers, in a spiritual sense; they make them eat their own dung, &c.; indeed our best works and duties, in the account of strict justice, are no better, Mal. 2. 3. *I will spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your own solemn feasts.* A person had better never do any good works, than make them his spiritual meat and subsistence.

XI. *Behold here the excellency of Jesus Christ.* He is meat and drink. He is indeed compared to all things that are excellent; he doth far excel whatsoever he is compared unto. He is as far above all other meat and drink, as the best meat and drink are above the coarsest pulse, and the most muddy water. See this excellency in a few particulars.

1. *Christ is spiritual meat and drink.* All other meat and drink is only corporeal: 'tis so in its own nature, and 'tis so in regard of the subject; it nourisheth not the soul but the body only, all their delicacies do not feed the inward man. Those that have the fattest bodies, have not always the fattest souls. But Christ is spiritual meat and drink; he feeds the soul, the conscience, the spiritual part. *His blood purgeth the conscience*, Heb. 9. 14. It refreshes the conscience, it cheers the conscience, his body strengthens the soul, and repairs the decays of the inward man.

(2.) *Christ is heavenly meat and drink*, Joh. 6. 32. *My Father giveth you the true bread from Heaven.* Other meat and drink is terrene and earthly. Your bread grows out of the bowels of the earth. Your wine is the blood of an earthly grape. The flesh you eat, is fed of the tender grass that springs out of the earth. If the earth should prove barren, you would soon feel a famine. *The King himself is served by the field*, Eccl. 5. 9. 'Tis true the blessing comes from Heaven, yet all the materials of meat and drink are earthly; but Jesus Christ is the bread of, and the wine of Heaven. The Manna came from the clouds only; but Christ from the beatific Heaven, even from the bosom of the Father.

3. *Christ is incorruptible meat and drink.* All earthly

meat and drink is of a fading perishing nature. The best bread grows mouldy in a little time, the best flesh putrifies and taints, the best wine grows eager and sour in time, and becomes unfit for the body of man; the very Manna itself, when it was kept till the morning of the next day, contrary to God's command, *bred worms and stank*, Exod. 16. 20. But Jesus Christ knows no corruption, his flesh and blood is now as sweet and pleasant after so many ages, as it was the first hour it was eaten and drank, Joh. 6. 27., and it will be as far from corruption at the end of the world, as it is now. The Manna in the golden pot corrupted not, though kept for many generations. Christ is Manna in that golden pot, the humanity in the golden pot of the divinity shall see no corruption.

4. *Christ is such meat and drink as preserves from death.* Other meat and drink cannot keep man from the grave. That rich man that fared deliciously every day, was not made immortal: *The rich man died and was buried*, Luk. 16. 22. All that generation that fed on Manna, and drank the water out of the rock, died, Joh. 6. 49. But Christ preserves the soul from death, Joh. 6. 50. *This is the bread of God that came down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die*; it immortalizes the soul that feeds on it. *He that believeth on me hath eternal life*, v. 51. And then.

5. *Christ is a soul-satisfying meat and drink.* *He that believeth on me shall never hunger, and he that cometh to me shall never thirst*, Joh. 6. 35. There is a hunger of desire, and a hunger and thirst of total emptiness and want. He that hath this meat and drink, shall never totally want him; it is not so with other meat and drink. A man may have his belly filled with other meat and drink, and may have a good quantity before-hand, and yet may at last want a morsel, and die for want of a draught of water; but he that once hath this spiritual meat and drink, though he eat but a little, shall never be utterly destitute, Joh. 7. 37, 38. The widow's handful of meal, and spoonful of oil, was never spent till God sent rain upon the earth, 1 Kings 17. 16. He that hath but a handful of Christ's flesh, and a spoonful of his blood, shall never see want, but shall have enough to satisfy him to all eternity.

6. *Christ is such meat and drink as gives life to the dead.* Other meat and drink cannot preserve a living body from death, much less can it give life, and restore breath to a dead

body. Put the most delicate meat, the strongest drink into the mouth of a dead man, and they will not give him life if the soul be quite departed; they may recover from a swoon, they cannot from death: but the flesh and blood of Christ quicken the dead. Christ by putting his flesh and blood into the mouth of the dead soul, conveys life into it; his flesh and blood make the lips of the dead to speak. *As the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will*, Joh. 5. 21. If thou hast any spiritual life in thee, thou didst receive it from the enlivening virtue of Christ's flesh and blood, communicated to thee by the spirit of life.

7. *Christ is such meat and drink as will never surfeit.* All other meat and drink, if it be taken immoderately and unseasonably, tends to sickness and surfeiting. The more luscious and delicate they are, the sooner do they surfeit the body. Hence is *Solomon's* advice, Prov. 25. 16. Drunkenness and surfeiting bring more to their long home, than pining or famine. But the flesh and blood of Christ never surfeit. A Man cannot eat and drink too much of Christ nor can they eat and drink him unseasonably. There is no killing, no annoying virtue in Jesus Christ: this meat and drink will never clog, the stomach. Christ is an occasion of death to none but to those that refuse him.

8. *Christ is such meat and drink as is suitable for all persons at all times.* Other meat and drink is not fit for all persons, nor for the same person in all conditions. That which will nourish a man may kill a Child. That which strengthens a man in health, may kill him in sickness. There is meat for strong men, milk for Babes, &c. But Jesus Christ is meat and drink for all persons, for all conditions. He is meat for the strong man, He is milk for the Babe. He is proper for the healthful person, and he is fit for the sickly person, He is the laboring man's food, and He is the sick man's diet. His blood is physical drink to him that is Sick cooling drink to him that is parched with heat, He is strong cordial drink to him that faints, He is a suitable nourishment.

9. *Jesus Christ is meat and drink that is freely bestowed.* He is not purchased by our money, nor procured by our industry, but freely communicated. Other meat and drink is procured at a dear rate. Men must till and plow, and sow their land; men must breed cattle, plant vines, dig springs and Fountains, otherwise they can expect neither meat nor

drink. The *Egyptians* in a time of Famine pawn'd their Lands for food, they gave their Cattle for bread, and at last sold their land outright that they might have food. Gen. 47. 15. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. But Christ is meat and drink though the most costly in himself, yet costless to us. Nothing is required on our part, but receiving of him. If any should offer money, Christ would say as *Peter* to *Simon Magnus*, Acts 8. 20. *Thy money perish with thee.* He that will not take this meat and drink as alms, shall famish for want of it.

USE 2. FOR EXHORTATION.

I. To such as want Christ; my counsel to them is, that they would labor for an interest in him; you cannot be well without him, you will famish your soul, if you have not Christ for your meat and drink.

Quest. How may we come to have an interest in him?

1. *Be thoroughly persuaded of your need of him.* This is the first step to the attainment of him. Look upon your natural guilt, upon all your sins, upon the severity of the curse of the law against disobedience, upon the exact justice of God in punishing sin; and upon your own helplessness either to satisfy justice, or to stand under the deserved wrath of God. and you will be convinced of your need of him.

2. *Wait upon Jesus Christ in that way in which he gives himself to sinners.* The public ordinances, chiefly the preaching of the word. In that Christ makes the tender of himself, and by that ordinarily, faith is wrought in the heart to embrace that tender, Rom. 10. 17. *Zaccheus* obtained Christ by being in the way of Christ, Luk. 19. 14. The ordinances are *Sycamore-trees*; climb up into them, and stay and wait till Christ come, he is to pass by that way.

3. *Observe his call and embrace it,* Prov. 9. init. Luk. 14. 16, 17, 18. Mark the impressions of the spirit, the knockings of Christ. Thus did *Zaccheus*, Luk. 19. 5. 6. *Zaccheus, come down, &c.* Beg of Christ that he would give a heart to come down, when he says, come down, He is the meat and drink of God. He that refuseth him, sinneth against his own soul; consider seriously of it. When you find your stomach crave meat and drink, think, O! What shall I do for spiritual meat and drink.

II. To such as have an interest in Christ, who is meat and drink, let me commend a few things to you.

I. *Feed on him.* Eat and drink of this flesh and blood every day. Christians grow weak, because they let their meat and drink stand by them. 'Tis not the flesh in the pot, but the flesh in the stomach, that gives nourishment; 'tis not the drink in the vessel, but the drink taken down that revives. Stir up spiritual hunger, and that will make you feed heartily on Christ. Eat and drink Christ by *Meditation*, eat and drink him by *Application*. Let your faith draw in Christ in every ordinance; keep your spiritual meals as constantly as you do other meals; your eating will help you to a stomach. Satisfaction and hunger are mutual helps one to another. Eating and drinking other meat take away the appetite, but they increase the spiritual appetite. Fixed times of spiritual feeding every day, are marvellously profitable; when you have prayed, call your heart to account what it hath taken in of Christ; when you have been reading, ask it what nourishment it hath received from the word; when the Lord's supper is over, enquire what refreshment is received. Put yourselves forward to frequent, constant, actual feeding; it's a pity such precious meat and drink should stand in corners, when the soul hath so much need of it.

II. *Be thankful for this meat and drink;* that it is provided for any, and actually dealt out to you; that you have that meat and drink which others want. There are many that have no other meat but sin, *They drink iniquity like water*, Job. 15. 16.; some eat the *bread of violence*, and drink the *wine of deceit*; some there are that *drink the wine of the condemned, in the house of their God*, Amos 2. 8. *They eat the flesh of men, and drink their blood like new wine*, Micah 3. 3. The greatest part of men have no other meat than the pulse of worldly comforts; no other drink than the puddle water of created things, and thou hast the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ to eat and drink: prize and value at an high rate the exceeding riches of this grace. We are to bless God for our corporal meat and drink. Jesus Christ gave thanks when he ate and drank, Joh. 6. 11., and so did the Apostles, Acts 27. 35., and so should all men do; it is brutish to eat and drink without thanksgiving. How much more cause have we to bless God for our spiritual meat and drink? The corporal is common to us with others; this is peculiar only to the elect, no other shall taste of this provision.

III. *Let your growth be answerable to such excellent feeding.* God expects that our spiritual growth should be proportion-

able to our spiritual feeding.

Bos Macer pingui in arvo, is prodigious. Husband-men when they put their cattle into pastures that are rich, where there is plenty of grass, and abundance of water, expect that their growth should be answerable. The Saints of God are highly fed, they have Angels meat, and should they not do Angels work? If you do not grow very fast, you will bring up an evil report of Christ; as if his flesh were not nourishing meat, his blood not nourishing drink, as if it were meat in shew, and not meat *indeed*; drink in shew, not drink *indeed*. Jesus Christ may repent that his body was broken, and his blood poured out to be meat and drink for you that are still lean and ill-favored, even dwarfs in grace. It's the Saints privilege that they should grow, because Christ is their feeder; and it is their duty, because they have such food, to be carefully mindful of growing; every limb of the new man should thrive. We should grow lower in humility, higher in heavenly-mindedness, broader and thicker in spiritual affections, &c. You cannot express your thankfulness for this royal meat and drink, any other way so much to the contentment of Christ, as by growing abundantly; it is that which our Saviour requires as a testimony of our union with him, and of thankfulness for that feeding virtue we receive from him, Joh. 15. 5. 8. As he is unworthy of meat that doth not labor, so is he more unworthy that doth not grow.

IV. *Shew pity to others that feed on other meat and drink.* Endeavor to communicate Christ to those that want him. We naturally pity famished men; lean cheeks, and pale faces, work some bowels in a miser, in an enemy. Commend Christ to others, persuade them to embrace him; you shall feel no want of meat and drink for yourselves, by communicating Christ to others. Though a thousand eat and drink of him, no one shall have the less.

V. *Do not despair of spiritual growth and strength.* 'Tis a dishonor to Christ to think that he should starve you. His flesh is strengthening flesh, his blood is strengthening blood, quickening blood, 'tis full of spirits, 'tis full of life. Though thy graces be weak, thy spiritual diseases violent, yet despair not; thou receivest more from Christ, than thou canst lose or spend.

SERMON VI. ROMANS 13.—14.

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

IN this Chapter the Apostle recommends to Christians the practice of several excellent duties for the adorning of their holy profession, in the world.

I. *Subjection to civil Magistracy.* This is urged by sundry arguments, from v. 1. to 8.

II. *The Heavenly and divine grace of love.* This is pressed by many arguments, v. 8. to 13.

III. *Honesty of conversation, v. 13.* He would have them abstain from all acts of intemperance, such as rioting, drunkenness, &c., and to walk, (*euschemonos*,) decently and honestly.

IV. *The putting on of Christ's righteousness.* This he names, to distinguish Christian graces from moral virtues; unless Christ and his righteousness imputed by faith be put on, that power to live holily may be derived from that fountain, a Christians holiness shall not exceed the righteousness of moral philosophers, and Jewish *Pharisees*; They did abstain from many works of the flesh, did practise acts of temperance and other virtues, but did not draw power from this fountain Jesus Christ, being strangers to Christ and his righteousness, all their eminent virtues gained no saving acceptance from God. The Apostle therefore, would have Christians not only to walk holily, but to draw all power of holy walking from Christ the root of all true holiness, v. 14.

V. *Not to make any superfluous and inordinate provision for the flesh, v. 14. latter end.* The text hath two parts.

I. *An act, (endusasathe.)* It's a metaphor borrowed from the putting on of garments, used often by the Apostle. In reference to the new man, Eph. 4. 24. to the spiritual armour, Eph. 6. 11. to acts of mercy, Col. 3. 12. And here to the application of Christ. But *put ye on.*

II. *The object, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

III. Expressions relating to one and the same person; they are many times joined together, though often used singly and apart. Acts. 16. 31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*; so in those Apostolical benedictions. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* We may distinguish them thus.

Lord is a name of power—Jesus of grace—Christ of authority.

The words afford a two-fold lesson; the one implied, the other expressed, viz. (1.) That Jesus Christ is a spiritual garment. (2.) That it's the duty of believers to put on this garment.

Doct. I. *The Lord Jesus Christ is a spiritual garment.* This is necessarily implied under the metaphor of *putting on*. This (*endusasthe*) doth imply (*enduma*) Jesus Christ is the soul's cloathing. Christ is a Christians vestment; as he is spiritual meat and drink, so he is spiritual apparel.

Two things are here to be opened.

1. To prove that Christ is a garment.

2. To shew the analogy between Christ and other garments

I. That Christ is a garment: this will appear two ways.

1. *From express Scriptures.* All those texts where mention is made of the putting on of Christ, are testimonies of this truth, Gal 3. 27. *As many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* That in Isa. 61. 10. *I will rejoice in the Lord, for he hath clothed me with the robes of righteousness; he hath put upon me the garments of salvation.* Jerom expounds it of Jesus Christ, *salvatorem et justificatorem nostrum*; who covers us with his own righteousness, as with a precious robe of salvation. This is taught by our Saviour in that counsel which he gives to the naked Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me gold, &c. and white raiment that thou mayst be clothed.* What are those (*imatia leuka*) but Jesus Christ himself imputed and applied to the soul, Isa. 52. 2. it's spoken of deliverance from *Babylon*, and more fully of redemption by Christ.

II. *From typical or more mysterious Scriptures.* There are many of this kind.

(1.) *Those garments of skins wherewith God clothed our first parents after the fall.* You read of them, Gen. 3. 31. This was not without a mystery. *Peter Martyr* hath this note upon that place, that by these garments was shadowed out the promised Messiah, that blessed seed of the woman, who should be sacrificed upon the cross, and cut out (as it were) into garments for the clothing of God's elect. The like is observed by interpreters from those kid-skins which *Rebecca* put upon the hands and the neck of *Jacob*, when she sent him to his father for the blessing, Gen 27. 16. They

did decipher Christ, with whom the soul being clothed obtains a blessing from the hands of God.

(2.) *Those garments of the High Priests.* God appointed in the law that glorious garments should be made for Aaron. you read of them, Exod. 28. 2. What was typified by those garments? They related to Christ. As the High Priest did typify Christ, so the garments did set out the pure administration of Christ, who offered up himself without spot, Heb. 9. 14. and they did also teach the people of God, that it is Jesus Christ who clothes their souls with choice raiment, that *fine linen* which is the *righteousness of Saints*, Rev. 19. 8. This type is more fully expounded in Zech. 3. 3, 4. Those filthy garments noted *Joshuah's* sins, and the sins of the people; that raiment which was afterwards put upon him, did signify Christ and his righteousness, wherewith all spiritual Priests are gloriously decked and clothed.

(3.) *The wedding garment in the gospel.* You read of it, Matt. 22. 11, 12. What is meant by this wedding garment, but Jesus Christ? who being apprehended, and put on by faith, works and creates the saving fruits of grace in the heart, and in the life.

II. Wherein stands the analogy? There are several uses of garments, in all which respects Christ is a garment to the soul.

1. *Garments are for the covering of the body.* Men use garments, that the nakedness of their bodies may not appear to the eyes of others; for this reason did our first parents sew fig-leaves together to hide their nakedness. In the state of innocency, when the body was without guilt, nakedness was the greatest ornament; when sin had polluted the body, then was nakedness deformity, therefore man sought the best garments he could to cover that nakedness. For the same reason, did God afterwards make man garments of skins to clothe him, Gen. 3. 17. Jesus Christ is a covering to the soul, he is the Lamb of God, that did not only redeem us by his blood, but also cover us with his wool, saith *Ierom*.

(1.) He covers the deformity of our natural filthiness.

(2.) He covers the ugliness of our actual sins, Psl. 32. 2.

(3.) He covers all the spots of our holy duties. The mercy seat under the law, covered the two tables of the Decalogue, Exod. 25. 17, 18, 21. This mercy-seat did typify Christ, who is called (*elasterion*,) Rom. 3. 25. as the mercy-seat is, Heb.

9. 5. the *Cherubims* covered the mercy-seat, and the mercy-seat covered the Ark, in which were the two tables of the law. Jesus Christ is that covering mercy-seat, that covers over all the sins which Believers commit against the law of God. Hence God is said not to *behold iniquity in Jacob*, Num. 23. 21. He doth not see it to impute it, because it is hidden under the covering mercy-seat, Jesus Christ.

II. *Garments are for ornaments*; they do set out the body, *viro vestis magnum decus addit honesta*. Garments to the body are as rich hangings, or costly varnish over a wall of clay, they make it look better than it would do. Garments mend the crookedness of bodies, and set out the perfections of beautiful bodies. Jesus Christ may well be compared to a garment in this respect, he puts a beauty upon the soul, a rich, lasting, perfect beauty; therefore he is compared to the wedding garment, Mat. 22. 12. and to the High Priests garments, Exod. 28. 2. which were made for beauty and glory. Hence Believers that are loathsome and crooked in themselves, are made excellently beautiful in Christ. You read much in *Solomon's* song of a believers comeliness, Chap. 4. 1, 2, 3, &c. and again, Chap. 7. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. 'Tis because of the beautiful dress in which he is attired. The comely garment puts comeliness on him that wears it. You read of the orient beauty and rich attire of the King's Daughter, Psl. 45. 13, 14. The King's Daughter is the real Saint, the *clothing of wrought gold*, and the *raiment of needle-work*, are nothing but Christ, and the graces he brings with him, in which the soul is invested. Christ is the only ornament indeed, he is a crown and diadem upon the head, he is a jewel in the bosom, he is a ring upon the finger. No soul hath any true beauty (though outwardly clothed in scarlet) that hath not on this garment. Christ is the soul's ornament, as he is a justifier, and a sanctifier, 1 Cor. 1. 30.; he adorns us as our justification, by putting us into a state of righteousness, and as he is our sanctification, by communicating to us his own comeliness in the seeds of holiness.

III. *Garments are for the defending of the body*. They are *munimenta corporis*. They are as light armour upon the body; in the winter they guard the body against the nipping cold, in the summer they preserve, and defend it from the parching heat; every blast would pinch the body, every thorn would prick, every stone would bruise the foot, if it were it not fenced by that raiment which is upon it. The

garments are a little moveable garrison, in which the body marches through many inconveniencies, which otherwise it could not do. The Lord Jesus Christ is the defence of the soul, he saves it from many a knock, which otherwise it would get.

I *He defends the soul from sin.* Sin hath not that power and dominion over a Believer that is clothed with Christ, as it hath over the soul that is unclothed. Rom. 6. 14. *Sin shall not have dominion over you.* Christ keeps sin from bearing that sway in a Saint which it doth in other men; it is a vanquished, wounded, crucified, enemy.

II. *He defends them from the rage and fury of men.* Man would tear them to pieces, if this garment did not interpose between their rage and the soul. Of this our Saviour speaks Joh. 16. 33. The sting cannot touch the skin till it pierce through the raiment. The arrow cannot wound the body till it pierce through the garment. Jesus Christ preserves his people from the devouring teeth of ungodly enraged men.

III. *He defends them from the fiery assaults and onsets of the Devil.* Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to sift thee as wheat is sifted; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, Luk. 22. 32. This roaring lion would tear them to pieces, if this impenetrable garment were not betwixt his teeth and their souls. These fiery darts would strike to their very hearts, did not this garment deaden them, and beat them back again. That the Devil by his malice and power doth not destroy you, is because you are clothed with this garment: could Satan either break through, or pluck off this garment, he would as soon prevail over you, as he doth over others.

IV. *He defends them from eternal wrath.* God is in himself to sinful men a consuming fire, Heb. 12. 29.; this fire doth not burn, or singe the Believer, because he hath this garment upon him, 1 Thess. 1. 10. 'Tis a Believers comfort, that the wrath of God must burn Jesus Christ, before it can burn him. The hottest flames cannot so much as touch the body till they have burnt through the garments. The wrath of God cannot seize any more on Christ, he hath lain under it once for ever, and therefore it shall never seize upon the Believer that is encircled about with Christ, as the body is with the garment. The fire cannot devour the man while the screen stands between him and the flame; Jesus Christ

is a Believers screen, which stands continually between him and the devouring flame of God's anger.

V. *Garments are for the warmth of the body.* 'Tis a great piece of the providential care of God, that garments that have no heat in themselves, should give warmth to the body, Job. 37. 17. The garments receive heat from the body, and then keep the body warm, Job. 31. 20. *If he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep.* Jesus Christ is in this respect truly a garment to the soul, he keeps the soul in a good warmth; there is indeed no spiritual warmth till Christ has wrought it, and when wrought, 'tis preserved by virtue of this garment. The two Disciples were very chill, as cold as ice, till Christ wrought a holy heat in them, then they began to glow, yea to burn; *Did not our hearts burn within us, &c.* Luk. 24. 32. if you find an holy heat within you, you are to attribute it to this heart-warming garment, as its only cause; the ordinances would never heat you, if Christ did not first heat them. We are by nature as cold as that child was, when his spirit was departed, 2 Kings 4. 3. 4. And yet Jesus Christ by laying himself upon us, chafes us into a lively warmth.

VI. *Garments are used for distinction.* They differ one sex from another. God would have the sexes distinguished visibly by their apparel, Deut. 22. 5. *The man shall not put on that which appertaineth to the woman, &c.* And as they distinguish sexes, so they should distinguish the conditions of men: *They that wear soft raiment are in King's Courts,* Mat. 11. 8. The servant and master now cannot be distinguished by their apparel unless it be thus, that the servant excels, the merchant and mechanic, the prince and peasant, are scarcely distinguished. God would have it otherwise, raiment should distinguish conditions as well as sexes. Christ in this regard is fitly compared to a garment. He distinguishes between the Believer and unbeliever, between the regenerate and unregenerate, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,* and 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* God hath made Jesus Christ to be the distinguishing character between him that shall be saved, and him that shall perish.

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *Behold Christ's excellency.* He is all in all; he is compared to all things, that are both necessary and excellent.

He is life, he is meat and drink, he is a garment. *Quid quæras, saith Austin, quod in illo non invenias? si esuris panis est, si sitis aqua, si in tenebris lumen est, si nudus es, immortalitatis tibi vestimentum.* Ministers are bound upon all occasions to preach up Christ, that men may see their need of him, that they may be provoked into a good opinion of him. He is as needful for the soul, yea, more than garments are for the body. He is all good, he hath all good in him, and that in a transcendent manner. *Quicquid velle potes et debes est Dominus Jesus Christus.* Consider how far he excels all other garments.

I. *Jesus Christ is a large garment.* Other garments can cover but one at once. One garment cannot clothe several persons, no more than one morsel can feed several men; but Jesus Christ is a garment of such extent and dimension, that he can cover many, though they be at ever so great a distance. Should I fear said *Bernard*, that Christ's righteousness will not serve for him and me? No, *Non est pallium breve, quod duos operire non potest.* All the elect of God, though they live in several nations, though they be a multitude which no man can number, Rev. 7. 9., yet they are all clothed, and all sufficiently clothed, with this one garment. *I saw, said the Evangelist, a wonder in Heaven, a woman clothed with the Sun, Rev. 12. 1.* This woman is the whole Church of God: this Sun that covers the woman, is Christ the *Son of righteousness*, as he is called, Mal 4. 1. His skirt is large enough to cover his whole Church, and yet never a member can complain of want.

II. *Jesus Christ is a garment for every part.* Your material garments will not serve every part. That which is proper for the head, will not cover the loins; that which fits the body, will not fit the feet: every part of the body hath a distinct clothing which is only proper for itself; but now Christ is a garment that fits every part, he is the diadem or crown upon the head, he is the robe upon the body, he is the shoes upon the feet, Luk. 15. 22. Christ is a complete suit of apparel, from head to foot, the soul is perfectly clothed.

III. *Jesus Christ hath the uses of all garments.* There is no one garment that serves for all uses to the body. Some garments are good for covering, but they are not for beauty; others serve for ornament and beauty, but they do not serve for defence. Some garments are good in the cold, but they

are not so useful and fit in a time of heat. Persons that are of ability have several garments for several uses, because no one garment is fit for all. But Jesus Christ is a garment for all uses to the soul; he is for covering, ornament, and defence; as good for all uses as for any use, he is a winter and summer garment, as good for cooling, as for heating; he is the travellers, the laborers, and the soldiers garment; he is light for walking, thick for stormy weather, strong for fighting, and spiritual warring against Satan, and his temptations. Christ suits all occasions of the soul, *He is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30.

IV. *Jesus Christ is a garment fit for all sexes, sizes, and conditions.* No one garment will fit all bodies. That which is decency in one sex, would be monstrous on the other. That garment which fits a child would be useless to a grown man. That which is proper for the subject, would be unsuitable for Princes; but now Christ is as proper for one as for another; he is as fit for the woman, as for the man; for the child, as for the father; for the King, as for the subject. As the Apostle said in another case, we may say in this, *There is neither Barbarian, Scythian, Jew nor Gentile, male nor female, bond nor free, but ye are all one in Christ*, Col. 3. 11. God hath made Jesus Christ a fit garment for the souls of all sorts of men. There is no soul too big, none too little, none too small, none too great, for Jesus Christ to array and cover.

V. *Jesus Christ is a durable garment.* All other garments are of a mouldering nature, the moth corrupts them, old age takes away their beauty; the strongest and finest garments turn to rags by daily use: but Jesus Christ is a lasting garment, the moth cannot fret it, old age cannot wear it thin. Christ is now as fresh as when he was first put upon *Adam* in Paradise. When our bodily garments shall be pluckt off, yea, when the very garments of our bodies, like the mantle of *Elijah*, shall fall into dust, then will this garment abide upon the soul as beautiful as it now is. The Lord did miraculously preserve the garments of the *Israelites* from waxing old, Deut. 8. 4. Though they were worn forty year's in the wilderness, yet they were not thread-bare; their bodies wasted, but not their garments, they were as fresh when they came to *Canaan*, as when they left *Egypt*. Jesus Christ, though he be worn every day, doth not wax old; he is as fresh upon the soul on its dying day, as upon the first moment of its regeneration.

VI. *Jesus Christ is a free garment.* All that is required on men's part is to put him on. He is provided without our cost, without our care. Though he be the most costly garment in himself, yet he is the most cheap garment in the world. Other garments cannot be had without money, Christ is obtained without money, without price. The Scripture speaks of buying him, Rev. 3. 18., this buying is free receiving. The Prophet expounds the phrase, Isa. 55. 1. *Buy milk and wine without money, without price.* Indeed this garment is so invaluable rich, that all the treasure in the world cannot purchase one inch of it. He that dreams of buying Christ, shall die without Christ.

II. *Behold the sufficiency of Christ for spiritual life.* Two things are necessary for the bodily life, food and raiment, 1 6. 8. Jesus Christ is both food and raiment; he is set out as raiment in baptism, Gal. 3. 27., and as food in the Sacrament of the supper; he is every way sufficient for all the concerns of the soul; he feeds it, he clothes it, and that with the best food, and best raiment, with himself; his flesh is meat, his blood is drink, his righteousness is clothing, substantial durable clothing.

III. *The misery of all those that are without Christ.* All men are by nature strangers to Christ, Eph. 2. 12. He that is without Christ, is without spiritual raiment, he is a naked man. The Scripture calls the state of nature a state of nakedness, Ezek. 16. 4, 1. and Rev. 3. 18. A naked condition is a miserable condition. Nakedness is a very comprehensive word. A naked man is exposed to the scorn of every eye, is a shameful object, Rev. 3. 18., is exposed to every storm, every shower wets him, every wind pierces him. A naked man is unfit for employment, he is neither fit to fight, nor to labor. Such as are without Christ are unspeakably miserable, their condition is full of shame, and full of danger; they have nothing to cover them from God's wrath, or from the Devil's rage, they have nothing to warm their hearts when they are cold with fears, terrors, despairs, and spiritual anguish. A naked body amongst darts and swords, is not such a spectacle of compassion as a naked soul exposed to the arrows of God's wrath. They are as unfit for any work, as the naked man is for labor and travel, Isa. 3. 6. He that is without Christ hath neither bread nor raiment.

IV. *The misery of those that reject Christ.* None but mad and barbarous men reject clothing. 'Tis the character of a

distracted mad-man to refuse raiment, Luk. 8. 27. You read a sad story of a man possessed with a legion of Devils, and the text says, he wore no clothes; his madness is evidenced by that he would suffer no clothes to be put upon him, for v. 35., when Christ had cured him, the text says, *He sat at the feet of Jesus clothed, and in his right mind.* 'Tis a sign that a man is spiritually possessd with a legion of Devils, who will not be clothed with this spiritual garment. And yet the world is full of these spiritual bedlams. They will go naked; let ministers say what they will, let the spirit of God use ever so much importunity, they will not be clothed, they will have none of Christ. These garments are hanged out every day in the public market, yea, men are intreated to take them even without money, and yet they will not. Is it not just that such men should be buried in Hell in their own rags, who will not embrace Christ, that they may be clothed with eternal salvation.

V. *None so well arrayed as Saints.* Dives, had purple, &c. Luk, 16. 19. They have Christ.

VI. Here is comfort for poor Christians, counsel for proud men, you that will have the best apparel, and the newest fashion.

VII. *When you put on your garments, think of Christ.* A serious Christian may spiritualize every thing he uses or beholdeth.

VIII. Hinder none from Christ, Exod. 22. 27, 28. as Job 24. 7. Amos 2. 8.

Doct. II. *Its the duty of men to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.* This is often recommended to us in Scripture. Two things I shall briefly open.

1. What it is to put on Christ, how we must put him on.
(2.) Why we must put him on.

I. Christ is put on two ways. There is a double putting on of Christ.

1. *A putting on of Christ for justification.* When by faith we apply him unto ourselves, by faith for righteousness. The Apostle tells us, that *Christ is made unto us of God justification*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. He is called *Jehovah, our righteousness*, Jer. 23. 6. 'Tis by his righteousness, that the Believer is constituted righteous in *foro Dei*, which is by an act of grace in God, imputing and reckoning this perfect righteousness of Christ unto him, as his own righteousness. Now then doth

a person put on Christ, when by an act of faith, he doth apply Christ and his righteousness unto himself for justification. This was that which the Apostle desired, Phil. 3. 9. *That he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is by the law, but that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God by faith.* When his righteousness is actually applied, received, relied upon, then is Christ put on: this is one piece.

2. *A putting on of Christ by imitation.* When we imitate the gracious life of Christ. This refers to sanctification, and new obedience. To put on Christ, is *virtute Spiritus Christi undique nos munire, quò idonei ad omnes partes sanctitatis reddamur*, Calvin, and so Erasmus. Inasmuch as ye are spiritually ingrafted into Christ, *Hunc ipsum induite, eluceat in omni vità quem sitis professi, exprimite quem imbibistis, &c.* Zuinglius, When we apply his righteousness for our justification, put on his example, and express his virtues in a course of sanctification, then, and not till then, do we put on Christ, as the Scripture requires.

II. Why we must put him on: there is good reason. I might be large in each, but I shall only give general reasons.

I. *Christ is of no effect to us if we do not put him on.* Garments neither warm, cover, defend, nor adorn the body, if they be not put on, Christ is rendered invalid to such as do not apply to him; his righteousness will not justify you, if you do not by faith put it on as a garment. His holy life will do you no good, if you do not imitate it; his righteousness will perish as to you, his virtues will be lost as to you, if you do not actually put on both. The Apostle speaks of making Christ of *no effect*, Gal. 5. 4.

II. *If we do not put on Christ both these ways, we can have no hopes of salvation.* If Jesus Christ be not put on for righteousness, there is no remission of sin; all our guilt is imputed to ourselves. 'Tis by the imputation of his righteousness that our sins are covered, Rom. 5. 20., and where there is no remission, there can be no salvation. And if we do not put on the virtues of Christ in a course of sanctification, we can have no Scripture-hope of Heaven. The Apostle is express for this. *He that hath this hope, purifieth himself as Christ is pure*, 1 Joh. 3. 3. Our justification is by Christ's righteousness, and our sanctification is an evidence of our justification, *Ergo*.

THE USES OF THIS.

I. *What shall we say of those that instead of putting on Christ, put on their own works and duties?* The Papists teach their Proselytes to cover themselves not with Christ and his righteousness, but with their own works, and their own righteousness. They call *Imputative* righteousness in scorn *putative* righteousness; well, let them clothe themselves with their own fleece, but let us be clothed only with Christ's righteousness, our own righteousness is too thin, and too narrow, it will neither cover us, or warm us, Isa. 28. 20. Our own righteousness is a soiled garment, a very *filthy rag*, Isa. 64. 6. The Apostle Paul was, as touching the righteousness of the law, blameless, Phil. 3. 6., and yet he durst not appear before God in the day of judgment in that garment, but in the garment of Christ's righteousness, Phil. 3. 9. Let us therefore abhor this doctrine; rather take Christ's counsel, than Antichrists. Antichrist's advice is, buy of him, &c., but Christ's counsel is to buy of him *precious raiment*, Rev. 3. 18. Let us rather be advised by the Churches counsellor Christ, Isa. 9. 6., than by him who is next to Satan, the Churches greatest outward destroyer.

II. *What shall we say of those, that instead of putting on Christ by imitation, put on the Devil.* Instead of expressing the virtues of Jesus Christ, hold out the vices of Satan; live inordinately, unholily, serving divers lusts and pleasures; full of envy, malice, intemperance, covetousness, licentiousness of every kind; instead of putting on Christ themselves they hate, and persecute all those that do thus put him on: let them know, they that will not put on Christ by sanctification, shall not put him on for justification. *He is made of God to us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. He that rejects him as to sanctification, shall be rejected by him as to righteousness and redemption.

III. *Be intreated to put on Christ.* Put him on both these ways.

I. *Put him on for righteousness.* Have you not all need of him? are you not unrighteous? are ye not under guilt? If your righteousnesses be as filthy rags, what are your unrighteousnesses? (2.) Is there any other garment that will carry you dry through the dreadful storms of God's wrath? you must make another Scripture if you will find another garment. God's Scripture mentions no other covering but God's righteousness. Read and remember that text, Rom. 9. 30, 31, 32, 3. Undervalue not the great love, and deep design of God in providing his Son for your raiment, *He is*

made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Therefore called the *righteousness of God*, Phil. 3. 9. God will accept of nothing you do till you be invested in this garment. He will own none that come not in his own livery. You shall have no blessing, yea, you shall have his curse, if you have not the kid-skins of Christ's righteousness upon your necks, and upon your hands; your elder brothers garments must be on you, else you cannot be blessed. Now that you may put on Christ, you must (1.) Put off all thoughts of your own worth. These are inconsistent, Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9. (2.) Beg of him that he would clothe you; lie at his feet, as *Ruth* did at the feet of *Boaz*, and say *Spread thy skirt over me, for thou art my near kinsman*, Ruth 3. 9. I conclude this, with comparing those two Scriptures, Jer. 23. 6. with Jer. 33. 16: in the first, Christ is called the Lord our righteousness, in the other, the Church is so called. (1.) Because that which is proper, to the head, is common to all the members. (2.) They are as willing to apply Christ's righteousness, as he is to communicate it.

II. *Put him on by an holy imitation*. Walk as Christ walked. (1.) Christianity consists chiefly in this. Christianity is *imitatio divinæ naturæ*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. (2.) 'Tis one end of Christ's incarnation; he became man, that, he might be a perfect pattern of holiness in our nature. (3.) He that doth not imitate his life, shall have no benefit by his death, 1 Pet. 2. 21.

SERMON VII. ISAIAH 32.—2.

“And a Man shall be as a hiding place from the wind.”

IN this chapter we have a glorious prophecy of the spiritual Kingdom of Christ: its written by the Prophet for the consolation of the Church in her present afflicted condition. This prophecy hath four parts.

I. The constitution of this Kingdom, v. 1. to 9.

II. An exhortation given unto the people, by repentance to prevent the miseries which should happen before the constitution of this Kingdom, v. 9. to 15,

III. A description of that good which the godly should receive from this Kingdom, v. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

IV. The conclusion of all, in that *Epiphonema*, 'v. 20. Wherein the prophet compares the people of God to those happy husband-men, who are in expectation of a plentiful harvest, after their labor and cost in tilling and sowing. *Blessed are they that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.* In the constitution of this Kingdom, two things are to be observed.

(1.) *The safe administration of it.* This is in the two former verses, *Behold a King, &c.* By *King*, we are to understand *Christ* the King of his Church; by *Princes* we are to understand those that do under Christ administer this Kingdom. 'Tis an allegory taken from human Kingdoms, in which the King himself, and all his Officers do administer in righteousness. The safety of this government is expressed in the second verse. *And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, &c.*

(2.) *The true simplicity of it in the public and private administration of all things, and all persons, v. 3, 4, 5. 6, 7, 8. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, &c.* The administration of this Kingdom shall be with sincerity, as well as safety. God would give men eyes to see, and ears to hear. Those that before were spiritually blind and deaf, should now have spiritual eyes to see, and ears to hear. *Those that were rash and heady, should now understand knowledge, those that stammered in the things of Christ should now speak plainly, v. 3, 4.* Yea, there should be such simplicity in the administration of this Kingdom, that vices should not be called any more by the names of virtues; evil should not be called good, nor good evil; but every thing should be called by its own name. *v. 5, 6, 7, 8. The vile person shall be no more liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful, &c.* Holiness shall be called holiness, covetousness covetousness, baseness shall be called baseness, under this spiritual Kingdom of Christ.

The Text falls under the first of these, *viz*, the safe administration of this Kingdom. *And a man, &c.* We may divide it into two parts. (1.) A danger hinted, *Wind* (2.) A remedy discovered, in which are.

I. *The Protector. A man.* 'Tis *ille vir (haish)* with an article, this man. 'Tis the King mentioned in the former verse; he that is there called *King*, is here called *a man*. 'Tis Christ who is a man, and more than a man, God-man. This is the *Protector*.

II. The Protection. This is set down by way of comparison. Here are four resemblances. (1.) *As a hiding place from the wind.* (2.) *As a covert from the tempest.* (3.) *As rivers of water in a dry place.* (4.) *As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.* I am now to speak of the first, namely, *a hiding place from the wind.* By *wind* we are to understand, troubles, and afflictions, tempestuous storms, whether they be outward or inward. Here are four words which all signify one and the same thing; only they are varied a little, that they may be fitted to the several metaphors; wind, tempest, a dry place, a weary land, trials, tribulations, temptations, are usually called wind in Scripture, as Mat. 7. 27. *The rain descended, and the winds blew, and the floods came, &c.* Two observations lie clear in the Text.

I. That godly men must expect windy days even in the times of the Gospel.

II. That Jesus Christ is a hiding place to all believers, in all the windy days which they meet with in this life.

I shall begin with the first, viz.

Doct. I. *That godly men must expect to meet with windy days under the Kingdom of Christ.* Christ's Kingdom, though it be a glorious Kingdom, yet it is not without stormy winds and tempests. There is a great deal of inward peace, serenity and calmness under the Kingdom of Christ. The Scripture foretels this, Ps. 72. 7. *In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace, so long as the Moon endureth,* Isa. 32. 17, 18. *The work of righteousness shall be peace, &c. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.* And the Scripture makes mention of external peace and quietness, which shall be under the Kingdom of Christ, Isa. 11. 6, 7, 8. *The wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, &c. And Micah 4. 3, 4. He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall break their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks, &c.* These and many prophecies of this nature are yet, I suppose, to be fulfilled, and they shall have their accomplishment before the end of this life. But yet believers are to meet with windy days even in Gospel times.

I. *Windy days of outward troubles.* Outward afflictions of all sorts are to be expected, sickness, weakness, poverty, reproach, persecution, and all other evils. These winds have blown very sharp upon the Apostles, Disciples, Martyrs,

and other servants of God in their generations; yea, upon whole Churches, the seven Churches are overturned by them; and they do so continue to this very day. *Through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* This was *Paul's* doctrine, Acts 4. 22. *Ye shall have tribulation ten days*; this message is sent by Christ to the Church of Smyrna, Rev. 2. 10. And our Saviour himself foretold the Church before his departure, that these winds would arise, Joh. 16. 33. *In the world ye shall have tribulation.* And Rev. 11. 2. *The holy City is given unto the Gentiles to be trod under foot forty-two months*, and v. 3. of that chapter, *The witnesses shall for the space of one thousand two hundred and sixty days* (which is the whole time of Antichrist's reign) *prophecy in sackcloth*; and to this very day, we see they have their sackcloth upon their loins. Till the fall of Antichrist these windy days will not be over.

II. *Windy days of inward troubles.* Temptations, desersions, inward fears and shakings in the soul. There will be these spiritual earthquakes and agonies in the souls of God's people, even in Gospel times. This wind did beat violently upon the Apostles: *without were fightings, within were fears*, 2 Cor. 7. 5. *Paul* felt these winds make a horrible noise in his bowels, in those fierce buffetings of Satan, which he speaks of, 2 Cor. 12. 7. Yea, these winds blew fiercely upon Christ himself, when he uttered those doleful words, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Mat. 27. 46. And if the King of the Church met with such a windy day of temptation, as we read, Mat. 4. *init.* and of desertion, as we read in this Text; the subjects must expect to meet with them. I shall give you a three-fold account of this point.

I. There is a Devil, an Antichrist, and wicked men, even under Christ's Kingdom.

II. *There is sin under the Gospel.* And where there is sin, there cannot but be winds. The wind is (as the philosopher teacheth us) an exhalation arising from the earth, drawn upwards by the power of the Sun, which meeting with the cold of the middle region of the air, is beaten back again: it is so light that it cannot descend, and so violently resisted that it cannot ascend; therefore it is carried aslant with a mighty violence through the air. The matter of winds is an exhalation, mixed for the most part of vapours, from whence it is that the wind is sometimes moist. The

same exhalations or vapours inclosed in the bowels of the earth, and not finding an open passage, cause an earthquake. Sin is the matter of spiritual winds without, and spiritual earthquakes within. Now as there will be winds and earthquakes, where there is the matter of them; so there cannot but be the winds of outward troubles, and the earthquakes of spiritual troubles where sin is, which doth engender and breed both these. Now the people of God sin under the Gospel, and from their sins do these winds and earthquakes proceed. Sin creates storms in Gospel days.

III. *These winds are for the advantage of believers, even under the Gospel: Ye are in affliction if need be, through manifold temptations, 1 Pet. 1. 6.* The winds are not more necessary for the world, than these winds are for the souls of God's people, even in Gospel times: I shall shew you the usefulness of the winds of Heaven for the earth, and shew you the usefulness of these spiritual winds in the same respects to the soul. Consider the parallel in five things.

I. *The wind is useful for purification.* The wind cleanseth and sweetens the air, carries away and disperses noisome and infectious vapours, that are hurtful to the bodies of men and other creatures; the wind is *ventilabrum nature*, nature's fan, by which all purifying vapours are driven away, Job 37. 21. *Men see not the bright light which is in the clouds; but the wind passeth and cleanseth them.* These spiritual winds, both inwardly and outwardly have, when sanctified by God, a purifying virtue. Those corrupting infectious mists and vapours of sin, which pollute the soul, are purged and driven away by the blasts of these winds, Dan. 11. 35. *Many shall fall, to try them, to purge them, and to make them white.* No soul is ordinarily so full of infectious savour as those who want these winds. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth, &c. Isa. 48. 11.* And no Christians have such sweet souls as those that are frequently visited with these winds of trouble. Corruption will hardly fasten where these winds do ordinarily blow. Saints have foggy souls in Gospel times.

II. *The wind hath a searching virtue.* It's a penetrating thing. If there be the least chink, the wind will find it out. As the light finds out the least hole, so doth the wind. These spiritual winds are of a searching and discovering nature. Temptations, desertions, outward troubles, will search the very inward parts of the soul. Christians

have found out those defects in themselves, which they could never espy, till God sent these winds to blow upon them. Many holes they have seen in their own spirits, which they could never discern till these windy days arose upon them. *He openeth their ears to discipline, and shews them wherein they have exceeded*, Job 36. 9. Transgressions, excesses, and spiritual defects too, are found out by these winds and tempests. Our Saviour lays down this useful effect of these tempestuous days, Mat. 7. 25, 27. *the winds blew, &c. and it fell not, &c.* Great winds do discover whether your houses be made of firm timber, or of shaking rotten wood. These spiritual winds are great discoverers, especially if they be in great extremity. *A sword shall pierce through thine own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be discovered*; the words of Simeon to the *Virgin Mary*, Luk. 2. 35.: the stony ground is not discovered, till these winds arise; but then 'tis fully discovered, Mat. 13. 20. 21. No Christian knows himself so thoroughly, as he that hath travelled through these gusts of troubles. *Peter* did not know his own weakness, till these high winds had searched him; then he saw the unworthy fear and apostacy of his own heart, Mat. 26. 70, 72, 74. *Peter* did not know his own mistrustfulness, till the wind began to be boisterous; then he saw he could sink as well as another man, Mat. 14. 30. Saints need self-discovery under Christ's Kingdom.

III. *The wind hath a cooling virtue*, When the air is heated by the scorching beams of the Sun, the wind passeth through it, and brings it into a cool temper again. These spiritual winds cool the soul. Christians are sometimes scalding hot in the pursuit of the world, or perhaps of some sin. God stirs up these winds, and cools that heat. Some sharp winds of distress of conscience, some gust of temptation, some piercing blast of trouble, abates those feverish heats; removes that eagerness, which was before in the soul, after things that cannot profit. That wind of God, that blew in *Saul's* face, colded that zeal for persecution which was in his heart, Acts 9. 1, 3, 4.

IV. *The wind makes men keep their garments closer about them*. You have heard of the fable of the Sun and the wind striving for the traveller's cloak; the issue was, the Sun got it: the more violently the winds blew, the faster he held it. These spiritual winds make the soul look better to his spiritual garments: he holds all his graces faster than at

another time. He keeps his faith, his hope, his patience, his integrity, tacked close about him. Job never was so careful of keeping his garments, as when he met with these winds, chap. 27. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *As God liveth, saith he, who hath taken away my judgment, &c. All that while my breath is in me, &c. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; till I die I will not remove my integrity from me.* Soldiers never keep their armour so carefully as when they come to an encounter. Christians are never so careful of their spiritual harness, as when the winds of tribulation and temptation beat upon them: and we have need to keep our garments, even under the Gospel.

V. *The wind hath an awakening power.* When it lifts up its voice with violence, the noise is so dreadful, that sleep is taken away from those that hear it. The mariner cannot sleep when the winds are up. The ship-master wondered; that *Jonah* could sleep when the winds were so high, and the sea so raging, chap. 1. 6. These spiritual winds awaken the soul out of sloth and carnal security. When there is an earthquake of inward trouble in the conscience, if the storms be sanctified, the soul is made more watchful than ever. *Psl. 77. 4. Thou holdest mine eyes waking, saith Asaph.* That storm of temptation, which then lay upon him, kept the eyes of his soul open, as well as the eyes of his body. That earthquake, which was at midnight, when *Paul* and *Silas* sang praises unto God, awakened the sleepy jailor, Acts 16, 26, 27. The natural conscience is startled by such providences; much more is the regenerate conscience. These winds are God's physic, which he useth to remove spiritual security; and God will make it effectual to accomplish his end. *Jonah* slept a-while; but God did awake him, both in his sleepy body, and more sleepy soul, before these winds ceased blowing, Mat. 26. 40, 41, 43. Saints under the Gospel have need of awakening.

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *Expect those windy days.* Do not think, that now the Gospel is come, now Christ's Kingdom is set up, storms are at an end. God doth every day confute this folly. The end of one tempest, hath been the beginning of another. Hitherto it hath been so; and we can see nothing to make us think, that it shall be otherwise. If you believe not this truth, you will have little benefit by the next doctrine. The winds will be very high in the Church of God: this is

evident in Scripture. However it be, this is our comfort; these winds, if we be godly, will blow us faster to Heaven; and the higher the winds, the nearer the calm. Expect outward storms; expect inward tempests: do not believe yourselves to be past either of these. Our former storms may, perhaps, prove calm weather, if they be compared with our future tempests. Preparing for them will be no prejudice, if they never come. When you are out of one temptation, look for another, before Antichrist's utter downfall.

II. *Get good provision against these windy days come.* Take to yourselves the whole armour of God, that ye may stand when the winds are at the highest; whether they be tempests without, or storms within; outward blasts, or inward earthquakes: 'tis the Apostles counsel, Eph. 6. 13, 14. God that foretels evil days, hath provided armour of proof against those days. Take this armour, (1.) No other armour will serve: *Saul's* armour will not serve God's soldiers. (2.) This armour will serve; it was never battered; it will never be broken: take it therefore, and put it on. (1.) Put it on wholly. (2.) Put it on speedily. (3.) Use it when it is on. (4.) When you have done all, hide yourselves in Christ; who is here called for their comfort, *Latibulum a vento*: of which comfortable point, I shall speak the next time.

SERMON VIII. ISAIAH 32.—2.

"And a Man shall be as a hiding place from the wind."

Two things I observed in this Text,

I. A danger intimated, in this word, *Wind*.

II. A remedy prescribed: *A man shall be as a hiding place.*

The observations were two.

I. That Christians must expect to meet with windy days, even under the Kingdom of Christ. Of which I have spoken.

Doct. II. *That Jesus Christ is the believers hiding place, in all the windy days which they meet withal in the World.*

He is *Latibulum*, or *Absconsio à vento*, whether they be windy days of outward trouble, or windy days of inward trouble, temptation, desertion, discouraging fears and terrors. Christ is a hiding place to them in all these days, and in all these cases. Here are four words used in this Text, which set out this hiding virtue that is in Christ; *hiding place, covert, rivers of water, shadow of a rock*. Many other parts of Scriptures bear pregnant testimony to this truth. Isa. 4. 5, 6. *The Lord will create, upon every dwelling place of Mount Sion, and upon all her assemblies, a cloud, &c.* This is spoken of Christ, the branch of the Lord, v. 2. This *glorious and beautiful branch*, the root of the stock of Jesse, shall be a cloud and smoke; a defence, a tabernacle, a shadow, a place of refuge, a covert; and that not to one, but to every dwelling place of Mount Sion, and to all her assemblies. To this agrees that of our Saviour, Cant. 2. 14. *O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret place of the stairs*. Jesus Christ is this cleft of the rock; he is the secret place of the stairs. Christ is called *Shiloh*, Gen. 49. 10. *Shiloh* is from the root *Shalah*; which signifies, *in quiete vel pace agere, tranquille et in otio vivere*, all safety is in Christ. The tunicle in which the infant is wrapt in the mother's womb, is called by the Hebrews, *Shiloh*; because it lies there securely, out of fear. In the prosecution of this point, I shall open these three things.

I. What it is in Christ that is a hiding place.

II. What it is of theirs that Christ hides.

III. Why Christ is a hiding place to them.

I. There are several things in Jesus Christ which make up this hiding place: indeed every thing in Christ is a hiding place. I shall instance.

I. *The providence of Christ*. The Scripture tells us, that *the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth*, 2 Chron. 16. 9. Jesus Christ hath the same watchful eyes of providence over his people, that the Father hath, Col. 3. 17. *By him all things consist*. It's one argument divines bring to prove Christ's divinity, because he governs the world by his providence, as the Father doth, Joh. 5. 27. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*: it's meant of his providential working. And Heb. 1. 3. Christ is said *to uphold all things, by the word of his power*; which is an act of providence. Now as Christ, by his providence, watcheth

over all things and creatures, so do his eyes watch continually over his people. Isa. 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it; I will keep it night and day.* This is one great stone of this hiding place.

II. *The attributes of Christ.* All the divine attributes are ascribed to Christ, as well as to the Father. *Eternity*, Mic. 5. 2. *Almightiness*, Isa. 9. 7. *Omniscience*, Heb. 4. 13. It's spoken of Christ, our High Priest. *Wisdom*, Prov. 9. 1. He is called *God only wise*, Jude 25. All these attributes are so many stones that make this hiding place, Prov. 18. 19. *The name of the Lord is a strong tower.* Christ's name the Prophet mentions; Isa. 9. 6: *Wonderful, Counsellor, &c.* Every one of these names is a room in this hiding place.

III. *The promises of Christ.* All the promise of God are in Christ; yea, and in him, *Amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. Christ hath purchased them: they all have their ratification and accomplishment in Christ. The Scripture is full of promises of all sorts; of protection, provision, deliverance, salvation. Every promise is a piece of this hiding place. Ps. 18. 30. *The word of the Lord is tried*: he is a buckler to them that trust in him. Christ's word of promise is the soul's defence.

IV. *The merits of Christ.* Christ hath, by the shedding of his blood, merited for his elect whatsoever is necessary. These merits are a believer's hiding place. *O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock*, Cant. 2. 14. those *foramina petreæ* are *vulnera Christi*. There the believer hides himself in the time of danger. As the dove, when she is pursued, flies to her windows, so the believer flies to the wounds of Christ, and there is hid.

V. *The intercession of Christ.* The Scripture tells us, that Christ appears continually before the Father for us; he is still moving for us, at the right hand of God: his intercession in Heaven, is the believer's sanctuary on earth. So the Apostle tells us, in two places, Heb. 6. 18, 19, 20; and Heb. 7. 25. *He is able to save, &c.* because *he lives for ever to make intercession for us.* Christ directs *Peter* to this, Luk. 21. 31.

II. What it is of a believer that Christ is a hiding place unto.

I. *Christ is a hiding place unto the outward man.* He hides that in time of storms: Christ hides that two ways.

(1.) *Sometimes he hides it from danger.* He keeps his people from the rage of them that would swallow them up. Thus the Church was hid, Rev. 12. 6. *The woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God; that they should feed her there, one thousand two hundred and sixty days.* Thus David was often hid from the fury of Saul; and his courtiers, that sought his life.

(2.) *Sometimes God hides it in danger.* That though his people be in danger, yet they are not destroyed. Thus the Church was hid in Egypt. *The bush was burning, and yet was not consumed,* Exod. 3. 2.

II. *Christ is a hiding place to the inward man.* And herein he excels all other hiding places.

(1.) *He hides the soul from sin.* The best of his people would sin more frequently, and more grievously, if Jesus Christ did not hide them from sin.

(2.) *He hides the soul from temptations.* He chains up Satan from tempting them, that he cannot bait them so furiously as he would; and when he suffers Satan to tempt, he doth not suffer them to be utterly overcome. Thus he was a hiding place to *Peter*, Luk. 22. 31.; to *Saint Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 7. Though he did not hide him from being buffeted, yet he hid him from being vanquished by those buffetings.

(3.) *He hides their graces.* Their faith, hope, patience, humility, &c. were not Christ a hiding place to their very graces, they would wither and die, and come to nothing: he hides the root of grace; keeps that warm, that it perish not; yea, he so hides it, as that he makes it fructify.

(4.) *He hides their joy, their peace of conscience.* Our comforts have need of Christ's protection, as well as our graces. Should not he be a hiding to our inward peace and joy; the wind of terror and temptation would soon blow them away. *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace,* Joh. 16. 33. Our peace is built upon Christ, is laid up in Christ, is preserved and defended by Christ. The Devil would soon quench our joy, if Christ were not a hiding place to it. Jesus Christ is in every place, and in every thing, a hiding place to his people.

III. Why Christ is a hiding place to them. } Necessity.
 There is a double ground of it. } Convenience.

I. *It's necessary that Christ should be their hiding place.*
 This necessity is grounded upon a double consideration.

(1.) *Believers want a hiding place.* They are exposed to many enemies and dangers. The World, the Devil, the flesh, are assailing, pursuing, and making attempts upon them every day, and that several ways. *Luther* was wont to compare the Church to a poor weak Virgin in a wild wilderness, where there is nothing but ravenous creatures that seek her life. Our Saviour's comparison is somewhat like it, Luk. 10. 3. *Behold, I send you forth as sheep among wolves. Joseph is a fruitful bough. The Archers have shot at him,* &c. Gen. 49, 23, 24, 25. Believers are in this world in a strange land; they are not of the world, and therefore the world hates them. They want a hiding place for their bodies, their souls, their graces, and their comforts. The chicken doth not want the wing and the nest, more than they do a hiding place.

(2.) *There is none other besides Jesus Christ, that can be a hiding place for them.*

I. They cannot be hiding places for themselves. They are weak and foolish, they expose themselves to danger; they know not well how to hide themselves in Christ; much more are they unable to be protectors to themselves. Should Christ leave the best of us to ourselves, we should be our own butchers, not protectors.

II. No other creature can protect and hide them. Kings and Princes cannot hide us, Psl. 146. 3.; and if they cannot, inferior men are much more unable. Horses and armies cannot be a hiding place to us, Psl. 33. 16, 17.; they are soon routed and scattered. If they could be hiding places to our bodies, yet surely to our souls they cannot. Gold and silver cannot be a hiding place to us: though men say to their wedge of gold, *thou art my confidence*, Job 31. 24. yet will not mountains of gold and silver be safe hiding places, in the day of trouble. The holy Angels cannot be hiding places to us; they are but sub-protectors; they do but spread Christ's wings over us. The truth is, all creatures want hiding places for themselves: the best of creatures are but as the dial; they cast no shadow, unless the Sun

shine upon them. The best of creatures are like *Jonah's* gourd; the least worm eats them through and through in a short time.

II. There is convenience as well as necessity: it's very expedient that Christ should be a hiding place to believers.

I. *He hath all qualifications* that may fit him for this work.

(1.) *He hath strength.* A hiding place must be *locus munitissimus*. Paper-houses will never be good hiding places. Houses made of reeds or rotten timber, will not be fit places for men to hide themselves in. Jesus Christ is a place of strength: he is the rock of ages; his name is the *mighty God*, Isa. 9. 6.

(2.) *He hath height.* A hiding place must be *locus excelssissimus*. Your low houses are soon scaled. Jesus Christ is a high place; he is as high as heaven: he is *Jacob's ladder*, that reacheth from earth to heaven, Gen. 28. 12.; he is too high for men, or devils: no creature can scale these high walls.

(3.) *He hath secret places.* A hiding place must be *locus abditissimus*. The more secret, the more safe. Now Jesus Christ hath many secret chambers, that no creature can ever find. Cant. 2. 14. *O my dove, that art in the secret places of the stairs!* As Christ hath hidden comforts, which no man knows, but he that receiveth them; so he hath hidden places of secrecy, which none can find out, but he that dwells in them. *Come my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut the doors upon thee*, Isa. 26. 20.

(4.) *Christ is faithful.* He that will hide others, had need be very faithful. A false-hearted protector is worse than an open pursuer; *Will the men of Keilah deliver me up*, said David? *They will deliver thee up*, saith the Lord; but now Christ is faithful, Rev. 3. 14. He is the faithful witness. He cannot be bribed to surrender up any creature, that comes to hide himself with him. Christ will die before he will betray his trust.

(5.) *Christ is diligent.* Diligence is as necessary in those that will hide others, as faithfulness. A sleepy guard may betray a castle, or garrison, as well as a faithless guard. But Jesus Christ is very diligent and watchful; he hath his intelligence abroad; yea, his own eyes run to and fro in the

earth, to see what contrivances are made ; and set on foot against those who are hid with him. Psl. 121. 3, 4. *He that keepeth Israel, neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.*

II. *Christ is fit in regard of that property he hath in his Saints.* All his relations make him a fit hiding place.

(1.) *He is the Captain-General of the Church.* The Church is compared to an *Army with Banners* ; Christ is the General of this Army, Josh. 5. 13, 14, It was Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, whom God hath made a *Leader and Commander* to the people, as the Prophet calls him, Isa. 55. 4. Who should secure the soldiers, but the General.

(2.) *He is the Church's King,* Psl. 2. 6. The King's Court is the subject's hiding place. *Nebuchadnezzar's* dream, Dan. 4. 12. shews, that Kings should be shelters to their subjects.

(3.) *He is the Church's Shepherd,* Joh. 10. 11, 12. Shepherds are to secure their flocks. *David* slew the lion that tore the flock.

(4.) *He is the Church's Father,* Isa. 9, 6. The father's house is the child's castle. The child, when he is pursued, makes strait to his father's lap, and there he is hid.

(5.) *He is the Church's Husband,* Eph. 5, 25. The house of the husband is the wife's garrison : there she is hid and protected, as well as nourished.

SERMON IX. ISAIAH 32.—2.

“ And a Man shall be as a hiding place from the wind.”

THE doctrine was, that Jesus Christ is unto a believer, a hiding place from the wind.

The uses are three, Information—Exhortation—Consolation.

I. For information : this consists of four branches.

I. *That believers are Christo chari* ; very precious in the esteem of Christ. Believers are persons of great worth : they are called *excellent ones*, Psl. xvi. 5. They are more

excellent than any persons in the world besides: they are flowers, roses, and lilies; the best of flowers, Cant. ii, 2, They are fine gold; others are the dross of silver, Jer. vi. ult. They are wheat; others are but chaff, Mat. xiii. 30. They are precious stones; others are but common stones: they are light; others are darkness: their worth appears by this, that Jesus Christ hides them in times of danger. Men do not hide rubbish or lumber; but their jewels, their writings, things of value: the Saints are the jewels of Christ, the jewels of the Crown; Christ will lose all, rather than one of these, Mal. iii. 17. *They shall be mine in that day, when I make up my jewels:* they are God's hidden ones, Ps. lxxxiii. 3. Jesus Christ will venture all the world to save one of his Saints: while he is able to protect himself, he will protect them; they are his very members, a part of himself. he keeps them with the same care he keeps himself. Wicked men look upon them as vile and mean things. but Christ accounts them his precious ones; he keeps the very number of their hairs, Mat. x. 30. It was a sign that *Jacob* respected *Rachel* and *Joseph*, more than all the rest of his household, because he was so careful of their preservation, Gen. xxxii. 2. He puts the handmaids and their children foremost; then *Leah* and her children, and then *Rachel* and *Joseph*. If there be but one place of safety to be found in the world, Jesus Christ will put the believer there. The Scripture saith, that *Noah* found favour in the eyes of the Lord, Gen. vi. 8. How is this grace of God to him evinced? When all the world was exposed to the violence of the deluge, God takes care to make an ark for his preservation. 'Tis a sign of the precious thoughts of Christ towards his Saints, that he makes himself a hiding place for their preservation: though they be ever so mean in the eyes of men, they are incomparably precious in the esteem of Christ.

II. *How impossible is it that any true believer should eternally perish:* the Scripture saith, that they can never perish, Joh. x, 28. They may seem to be lost in the judgment of men; and in their own apprehension; but they cannot be lost. Amongst other reasons, this is one, *Christ hides them.* Satan must storm and level this hiding place, before he can reach a believer. to destroy him. The treasury must be broken, before the treasure that is hid in

it can be carried away ; the jewels cannot be taken away, before the chest that keeps them be broken : the hiding place must be entered before that which is hidden in it be removed. Christ stands between his elect and danger : the Devil must pierce Christ himself, before he can touch a Saint to destroy him. The believer is hid in Christ, and Christ must suffer, before he can suffer : Jesus Christ did once conquer the Devil, for the believer's freedom ; and the Devil must conquer Christ, before he can finally overcome the believer,

III. *See here the all-sufficiency of Christ.* He is to his holy one's, every thing they stand in need of. He is their life, their food, their raiment, and their hiding place. A hiding place is sometimes as necessary as meat and clothing. The Saints here are militant ; they could not live, if they were not hid : though Christ were every thing else, yet if he were not a hiding place, he were not enough ; but he is a hiding place, as well as food. Jesus Christ serves all the necessities of the soul. The Saints of God are, in Scripture, compared to sheep, Joh. x. 14, And a fold is as necessary for sheep as pastures ; as the pasture preserves them from starving, so the fold from worrying : Christ is both fold and pasture, and so a sufficient shepherd. The Church of Christ is compared to an army, Cant. vi. 10. A place of retreat is as needful to an army, as any other provision. Christ is a retreating place to his soldiers ; he doth not only feed and clothe them ; but he hides them too. He doth not only give them ammunition to fight, when they are in the field ; but he is a hiding place to them, when they retreat. The Church of Christ is compared to a ship, Isa. liv. 11. A haven is as necessary for a ship, as either masts, or sails, or anchors : Jesus Christ doth not only provide sails and tackling for his ship, but a haven also ; yea, he himself is the haven ; when his ship is weather beaten by long voyages and sharp storms, he brings her into the haven ; and there she is out of danger. He is fit for all the exigencies and necessities of the soul ; a complete all-sufficient Saviour.

IV. *The misery of those who are out of Christ.* One great work of the ministry is, to discover the misery of a Christless condition. All unbelievers are without Christ. Though

they be in Christ by outward profession, yet they are without Christ, in regard of saving union, Eph. ii. 12. The misery of being uninterested in Christ, is unspeakable, even in this, that he is without a hiding place. No greater emblem of misery, than to see a man in a sharp storm, without a shelter: he that is without Christ, has neither shelter for soul nor body: when men assault, or devils tempt, or sin sets upon him, he hath no place to retire to, where he can have any security. He that is without Christ, hath not one bush to defend him, either from men, devils, his own conscience, or the indignation of God: he lies open to all the hostile incursions of men, and devils, and the wrath of God, which is as a consuming fire: all his confidence is but as the shadow of a spider's web, which will never keep him safe.

USE 2. EXHORTATION.

I. *Let not believers be inordinately afraid in time of danger. Should such a man as I fly, saith Nehemiah, and who being as I, would go into the temple to save his life? Neh. vi. 11.* A fear of providence, becomes the people of God, as well as others; but fear of anxiety, or distrust, should be far from them; wonderously confident have the Saints of God been in times of danger, upon this very ground. *God is our refuge and strength, saith the Church, a present help in time of trouble; therefore, we will not fear, though the earth be moved, &c. Psl. xli. 1, 2, 3.* A Saint that believes this, may laugh at fear; he may esteem iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood, as the Scripture saith of Leviathan, Job xli. 27, 28. 'Tis a disparagement to your hiding place, that you should be afraid. If Christ be able to hide you, you shall not be undefended. Let the world rage, let devils roar, let men lift up their voice, let sin be ever so furious, Christ is a hiding place: he hides you from God's wrath, and he will hide you from man's fury. Let unguarded sinners fear and tremble; but let Christ's hidden one's rest in settled peace, in firm security. Your sinking doth upbraid your hiding place, with weakness and insufficiency.

II. *Acknowledge from whence all your safety and protection comes.* That you are hid from danger, when others are exposed to it; that you are sheltered, when others are not; that your souls, bodies, graces, comforts are secured, is not

because of your own care, but because Christ hides you. *If the Lord himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say, they had swallowed us up quick when their wrath was kindled against us, Psl. cxxiv. 1, 2.* If Christ did not prepare a place for the *Woman, the Church*, and if he did not give her the *two wings of an Eagle* to carry her to her hiding place, the Dragon would soon devour both her and her child, *Rev. xii. 14.* Acknowledge the protection of Christ, let him have the praise of all your safety. The ancient *Romans* used to pay tribute for shadows: let Christ have praises for his shadowy protection. Whosoever are the instruments, he is the principle Author of all your hiding.

III. *Take heed of making any other hiding places.* Men are very apt when danger approacheth, to dig created hiding places for themselves. We may read how the Prophet reproves this practise, *Isa. xxii. 9, 10, 11.* A providential use of outward means, is not only lawful, but necessary, but carnally trusting to any such hiding place is sinful. To trust to creatures in time of danger, is very atheistical: God hath cursed such confidence, *Jer. xvii. 5. 6.* But to descend to particulars; there are sundry places which men create to themselves in time of danger.

(1.) *Many make great men their hiding place.* When troubles arise they have recourse to men, that by the strength of horses and armies they may hide them; alas, what a vain confidence is this. *Ahaz* thought to have hid himself under the King of *Assyria*; but what was the event? *2 Chron. xxviii. 20.* *The King of Assyria came unto him, but strengthened him not.* The skirt of men, the strength of horses is weak and very vain, *Prov. xxi. 31.* *The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord.* We must say as the Church, *Lord give us help in trouble, for vain is the help of man.* He that makes a chariot his hiding place, shall not be hid: God will drive the wheels over their own back. If men and horses could be a hiding place from men to your bodies, they cannot be competent shelters to your souls; they cannot hide the inward man. I shall conclude this with *Psl. xx. 7.* *Some trust in chariots, &c. They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright.* He that makes men and horses his hiding place, shall bring down the fire of God's anger upon his hiding place, and

himself, Isa. xxxi. 1, 3. When God shall stretch out his hand; both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fall together.

(2.) *Others make strong castles and defended cities their hiding place.* When danger approaches, they fly to such places, and there think to be safe: but, alas! how insecure are all these places? The high walls of *Jericho* fell down with a shout, when Jesus Christ gave commandments for their downfall, Josh. vi. 20. Such hiding places are made of perishable materials. *Nineveh* was a strong place, but it could not secure it's Inhabitants. See how the Prophet derides their confidence, Nah. iii. 12, 13, 14. *Tyre* was very strong, Ezek. xxvii. 11. *The Gammadims were in thy towers*: they were a people of *Phœnicia*, called *Gammadims*; as if we should say, *virī cubitales*, because of the great strength they had in their arms. *Virī robust etī laceratosi*, saith *Junius*. And yet for all their strength, they could not preserve their towers; nor their towers them, from the rage of *Nebuchadnezzar*, o. xxvi. 7, 8, 9. If any defended place could hide you, yet it could but hide the outward man; it could be no security to the soul, either from sin or temptations. Devils can climb the highest walls; brazen walls cannot keep out his temptations, much less can they secure you from the wrath of God.

(3.) *Others make their silver and gold a hiding place.* The rich man's wealth is his *strong city*, and as a *high wall* in his conceit, Prov. xviii. 11. But, alas! how unable are these things to secure us? Riches sometimes lay men open to danger: poverty is a better securer than riches, even from bodily danger. *Osiander* reports, that in the bloody *Parisian* massacre, many rich Papists were murdered for their wealth, as well as Protestants. Though their profession made them Papists, yet their wealth made them Hugonots, as well as others. However, riches cannot secure a man from a disease, or from death, Luk. xvi.; or from temptation, or from troubles of conscience, or from the wrath of God, Prov. xi. 4. and Zeph. i. 18. *Neither their silver or gold, can deliver them in the day of the Lord's anger.*

(4.) *Others make their outward privileges a hiding place.* To this the carnal Jews did ever betake themselves, when the Prophets threatened any storms. Nothing is more frequent

in Scripture than this, Jer. vii. 4. *The temple of the Lord, &c.* Mic. iii. 11. and Mat. iii. 9. *Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father, &c.* But, alas! all this will not hide you. *Go to my place at Shiloh*, saith God, Jer. vii. 12.; *go to Jerusalem*, and see how it is there; *go to the seven Churches of Asia*, and see how it is there. These privileges are so far from being hiding places, that if he that enjoys them, be not hid savingly in Christ, they will expose him to more sudden, more certain, and more dreadful ruin. Mat. xi. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. *Joab* was slain at the horns of the Altar. God's temple shall not be a sanctuary, except he who is the Lord of the temple be our hiding place: indeed, whatever hiding place is made, besides Christ, shall not shelter when storms come: we may say of all these hiding places, as the Prophet doth of that one, Isa. xxviii. 15, 16, 17, 18 Every hiding place, besides Christ, is a hiding place of falsehood.

IV. *Be persuaded actually to hide yourself with Jesus Christ.* To have a hiding place, and not to use it, is as bad as to want one: fly to Christ; run into the holes of this rock. Three things must be done by all those that would hide themselves with Christ.

(1.) *You must put away sin by repentance.* Jesus Christ will not be a sanctuary for rebels; he will not protect evil-doers. Christ will never hide the Devil, nor any of his servants, Isa. lv. 6, 7. *Let the ungodly forsake his way, &c.* David knew this; therefore he prays, that God would teach him to do his will, Psl. cxliii. 9, 10. *Deliver me, &c. I fly unto thee, to hide me. Teach me to do thy will.* He that will not do the will of Christ, shall receive no protection from him. *Protectio sequitur allegiantiam*: you must be his liege people, if you will have him to defend you, Job xxii. 23, 25.

(2.) *You must pray that he would hide you.* The promise is made to prayer, Isa. lxxv. 10. *Sharon shall be a fold of flocks; the valley of Achor, a place for the flocks to lie down in*; for my people that have sought me. He that prays most fervently, is like to be hid most securely, And then,

(3.) *You must believe in him.* Faith is the key that opens the door of this hiding place, and locks it again. One word in the Hebrew, both signifies to trust and to make a refuge,

Ps. lvii. 1. He that doth not make Christ his trust, shall not have Christ for his hiding place; he will hide none, but those that commit themselves to him. *I will set him on high, because he hath known my name,* Ps. xci. 9, 14. Dependence on Christ, is not the cause of hiding us; but it is the qualification of the person that shall be hid.

USE 3. CONSOLATION.

I. *It's comfortable against the malice of all their enemies.* Though devil's rage and men roar, yet here is shelter against both. Satan is a destroyer, but Christ is a hiding place. This made *David* so secure, Ps. iv. 8. *I will both lay me down and sleep, for thou, Lord, makest me dwell in safety.*

II. *When other hiding places fail.* God's people often find, by experience, that the places of their protection, are places of destruction. Well, when all other places fail, Christ will not. See how it was with *David*, Ps. cxlii. 4, 5. And when his hiding place at *Ziglag* was gone, yet his Saviour was not gone, 1 Sam. xxx. 6. He encouraged himself in the Lord his God. 'Tis a mighty encouragement to believers, that Christ is a hiding place. (1.) *He is a safe and strong hiding place,* Isa. xxxiii. 16. Christ is a rock; and he that is in Christ, is in the munitions of rocks. (2.) *He is a large hiding place.* There is room enough for his elect: his skirt is large. (3.) *He is a hiding place to the soul, as well as to the body.* (4.) *He hath undertaken to hide us:* God hath committed all his elect to Christ, that he should hide them. (5.) *Christ is a man:* as he is God and so able, so he is man also; he hath not put off his humanity; he is pitiful to his own flesh. I suppose, Christ is here called a man for the comfort of men.

SERMON X. MATT. 9.—12.

“They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.”

THIS Text is an apology, made by our Saviour, in defence of his charitable practice in conversing with publicans and

sinners, for the good of their souls. *Matthew*, the publican, is called, by Christ, from the receipt of Custom, to be one of his followers, v. 9.

Note. Christ's preventing grace, Mar. i. 16, 17.

Note. *Jesus Christ is able to convert the worst and greatest of sinners*, *Matthew*, the publican; *Zaccheus*, the extortioner; *Mary Magdalen*, that had seven devils in her; *Manasseh*, a bloody murderer, a great idolater, a sinner of the first magnitude; *Paul*, a persecutor: all these are converted and brought home to God. God's grace is so efficacious, that it can over-power, and bring in the worst of sinners. No sinners greater than publicans, yet many of them were converted, by Christ. *Matthew* being called; it presently follows, v. 9. *He arose and followed him*.

Note. *Those that savingly receive the call of Christ, do presently yield obedience*. *Zaccheus*, when called down from the Sycamore tree, speedily obeyed, Luk. xix. 6.: *Elisha*, when effectually called, presently left the plough, and followed *Elijah*, 1 Kings, xix. 19, 20; *Paul*, being savingly called, immediately obeyed, Acts ix. 6., Gal. i. 16.; and *Simon* and *Andrew*, as soon as they were thus called, left their nets and followed Christ, Mar. i. 16, 17, 18. Christ gives strength to obey, when he effectually calls: this convert makes Christ a feast, Luk. v. 29.; which is implied in v. 10. of this chap.

Note. *New converts are full of affection and love to Christ*. *Matthew* feasts our Saviour; and so did *Zaccheus*, Luk. xix. 6. Those that, before conversion, would have been glad to stone him, now kindly and familiarly entertain him. A true convert thinks nothing too good, too dear for Jesus Christ. At this feast, many publicans and sinners were present: perhaps, invited by *Matthew*, for their soul's good.

Note. *Such as are truly brought to Christ themselves, do what they can to bring others to Christ*. We have two clear examples of it, Joh. i. 40, 41, &c. *Andrew* being called, calls *Simon*; *Philip* calls *Nathanael*, v. 45.: another example in the woman of *Samaria*, Joh. iv. 28, 29. The Scribes and Pharisees, observing these passages, begin to quarrel with Christ's Disciples, v. 11.: *Saint Luke* saith, they murmured against his Disciples, c. v. 30.

Note. *'Tis a grief to wicked men to see others brought home to Christ.* This ariseth from envy to Christ, and hatred to men : and then they question with his Disciples, about this. *Why eateth, &c.*

Note. *'Tis the mark of a man desperately wicked, to endeavour to draw Christ's Disciples from their obedience.* The Pharisees were often scandalizing Christ, to his Disciples, that so they might draw them from their allegiance : but why do they go to the Disciples, and not to Christ ? They thought the Disciples were weak, and therefore might be more easily won.

Note. *'Tis the property of corrupters and seducers, to make their hottest attempts on such as are the weakest.* Satan set first in Paradise on the weaker vessel, Gen. iii. ; and so do all others that follow the trade. Young chapmen are most likely to be deceived.

Our Saviour hears this dispute, and steps in with them in his own person. *'Tis likely, the Disciples acquainted him with it, as they usually did in other cases ; or else, by the flocking of the multitude about them, he observed it ; or by the omniscience of his divinity, he knew it ; however it was, the Text saith, he appeared in the controversy, v. 12.*

Note. *Jesus Christ will plead for them that are quarrelled with for his sake.* The Disciples are baited, by the subtle Scribes and Pharisees ; and see how ready Christ is to come to their rescue : Christ will back all those that stand up for him. Now, the answer which our Saviour gives to this cavil is the Text. *They that are whole, &c.* Which is more plainly expounded in the next verse, *I came not, &c.* Our Saviour tells them, that he did, in this action, the office of a good Physician ; took all opportunities for the good of sinful souls, *q. d.* If a Physician may visit infected persons, &c. ; and he doth withal secretly intimate to them their misery, that while they continued in their present self-conceitedness, they could expect no benefit at all by him. *They that are whole need not, &c.*

They that are whole, (oi ischuontes). They that are of ability or strength. *'Tis referred in Scripture, both to the body and soul ; and it notes, that man, who is either really or conceitedly strong in body is (ischuon;) and he that is spiritu-*

ally stronger, conceitedly so, is a whole man, (*o ischuon*;) here it means, men that are opinionated and conceited of their own ability. It doth secretly point out the Pharisees' distemper: though they were as other men, in regard of their spiritual condition, yet they had good thoughts of themselves; they were strong men in their own conceit.

Need not, (ou chreian echousi). The word signifies necessity and usefulness, Rom. xii. 23. Contributing to the necessities of Saints, (*tais chreiais*,) Mat. vi. 8. *Your heavenly Father knows what things you have need of, &c. (on chreian echete.)* The word signifies also, a necessary office, as Acts vi. 3. *Look out among you seven men, &c. whom we may appoint over this business, (epi tes chreias tautes.)* Men that are whole, as before, they can make no use; they have no want of a Physician. A Physician, (*iatrou*) The word signifies a healer. The work of a Physician, is to heal. God hath given men insight into that study, to prevent and cure diseases.

But they that are sick, (oi kakos echontes.) They that are evil affected. 'Tis referred both to the outward and inward man. There is a sickness of the body and mind; and the phrase expresses the nature of sickness. Health is (*eueria corporis*, a right temperance of body. 'Tis *malus habitus corporis*. Spiritual sickness is, *malus habitus animi*. When the spiritual part is disaffected, the soul is spiritually sick. In this place, it relates to both.

The words are a double proposition, in which are,

I. The subject; this is two-fold.

II. The predicate; two-fold.

(1.) That men that are whole, need not a physician.

(2.) That men that are sick, do need a Physician.

The sum of all amounts to these five observations:—

I. Sin is a spiritual sickness, a spiritual disease.

II. Jesus Christ is a Physician, for the curing of this disease.

III. Some sinners are spiritually sick, and yet think themselves whole.

IV. Christ is not a Physician to those that think themselves spiritually whole.

V. Those that see their spiritual sickness, shall find Jesus Christ, ready to heal them.

I begin with the first, viz.

Doct. I. *Sin is a spiritual sickness.* This is intimated in the Text. 'Tis the very foundation of this defence of Christ: he points out these publicans, with whom he now conversed, as so many diseased men. Every sin is a spiritual disease, every iniquity is a real malady; sinful men, are truly sick men: sin hath many names in Scripture, a burden, a wound, darkness, bonds, folly, and here a sickness. Two things I shall open here, by way of explication.

I. Prove that sin is a sickness.

II. Shew what kind of sickness it is.

I. That sin is a sickness. This is proved two ways.

I. *From clear testimonies of Scriptures.* The word of God calls it a sickness, Isa. i. 5. *The whole head is sick, &c.* It hath relation both to *Jerusalem's* miseries, and sins: she was sick with misery, and with sin; therefore sick with misery, because sick of sin, Ezek. xxxiv. 4. The Prophets of *Israel* are compared to shepherds, and they are charged with this, that *they did not strengthen the diseased, nor heal that which was sick*; by which is meant the sinful members of that Church, whose conversion and reformation the Prophets had not endeavored, and Eccl. vi. 2. *Solomon* calls covetousness an *evil disease*. Hence sin is called in Scripture by the name of diseases; 'tis called *the plague of the heart*, 1 Kings viii. 38. There are as many diseases of the soul as of the body. Drunkenness is a spiritual dropsy; security a spiritual lethargy; envy a spiritual canker; lust a spiritual fever, Hos. vii. 4. *They are all adulterers, as an oven is heated by the baker.* Apostacy and backsliding are the spiritual falling sickness; hardness of heart is the spiritual stone; searedness of conscience is a spiritual apoplexy; unsettledness of judgment is a spiritual palsy; pride a spiritual tumor; vain glory a spiritual itch. There is not any sickness of the body but there is some distemper of the soul that might be paralleled with it, and bear the name of it. Hence also in Scripture, the pardoning of sin is called healing, Psl. ciii. 3. *who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.*

II. *From the effects of sin.* Sin produces all those effects upon the soul which sickness does upon the body.

I. *Sickness unfits the body for action.* Men that are active in health, are indisposed for any thing in sickness. The mariner cannot row, nor the soldier fight, the husband-man cannot till, nor the merchant trade; it takes a man quite off from all his labors, and that both in act, and in affection, Eccl. xii. 1., what was loved before, yields no pleasure. Sin unfits the soul for spiritual employments; for prayer, for hearing, for meditation, &c. and the more power it hath over the soul, the more is the soul indisposed for holy exercises. Even God's own children, when they have fallen into some spiritual sickness, are exceedingly indisposed to the things of God. Their zeal, their forwardness, their activity is much abated. When *David* had fallen into that long sickness, how unlike was he to himself, he had no actual repentance, till *Nathan* came with a message from God and quickened him. Sin quencheth the spirit in godly men, as water the fire. Sin takes off the edge of the soul, deadens the appetite and affection to the things of God: it locks up the heart that it cannot act as it was wont to do.

II. *Sickness begets torment and anguish in the body.* When sickness is in extremity in the body, how doth a man cry out of pain? head and heart, and every part is under torment. What restless tossings are men under when diseases are violent; hear how *Job* complains, chap. xxx. 16, 17, 18. Sin is the cause of torment and painfulness in the soul. The sin of *Felix* made him tremble, Acts xxiv. 25. *Cain's* sin put his spirit into such anguish, that he cried out, *My punishment is greater than I can bear*, Gen. iv. 13, 14. The sin of *Judas* brought such despairing torment upon his soul, that he takes away his life to end his misery, Mat. xxvii. *init.* and even God's own people, when they fall into this spiritual disease, are pained at the very heart; till, by pardon and remission, they have obtained a healing from God. How full of pain was *David's* spirit, by reason of his sin? He was as a man upon the rack for a long time; if he did ever recover his former serenity, see Psalms vi. and xxxviii. Many of the dear children of God do, by sin, fill their hearts with such anguish, that they are never without much smart to the day of their death.

(3.) *Sickness doth bring uncomeliness,* The most beautiful body in the world, if pining sickness continue long upon

it, becomes like a garment that is moth-eaten; the eyes sink, the colour is lost, the skin is shrivelled, the bones stick out, &c. *Job* observes this, chap. xvi. 8. *Thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me; and my leanness rising up in me, beareth witness to my face.* Sickness makes straight bodies bow down, beautiful faces look ghastly, well-coloured cheeks look pale, and oftentimes the more beautiful that sickness finds us; the more uncomely doth it leave us. Sickness turns youth into old age, *Lam.* iii. 4. *My flesh and my skin hath he made old.* Sickness dries up the spirit, *Prov.* xvii. 22. *A merry heart doth good, like a medicine; a broken spirit dries up the bones.* Sin takes away the comeliness of the soul. The first sinful sickness that ever entered into the world hath turned the souls and bodies of all mankind into deformity and ugliness. Could we see the picture of *Adam's* soul in the state of innocency, and compare it with the soul's that are diseased with sin, we would wonder at the sad change. Sin is a very deformed thing; it turned Angels of light into ugly devils. Those who were never healed by regeneration and remission of the disease of sin, what deformed souls have they? they have not one spot of beauty upon them, *Psl.* xiv. 3. *They are altogether become stinking.* A dead carrion, a putrified carcase, is as beautiful and sweet an object, as a sinful diseased soul. Yea, even God's own children, by falling into sin, though but in one or two particular acts, lose much of their beauty: they do not look with that grace they did before: every act of sin casts a dark thick shadow upon the soul. As deep wounds leave scars upon the body, so sinful acts leave some scars of infamy upon the soul. A Saint looks not like the same man he was, before he fell into sin.

(4.) *Sickness brings death.* *Dorcas* was sick and died, *Acts* ix. 37. Long sickness, if not removed, will bring the strongest body to the dust of death: sickness is indeed, *Anteambulo mortis*, the forerunner of death. The sick-bed is the direct way to the dark-bed, the grave: sin brings death to the soul. One disease of sin, if it be not healed by Christ's blood, will certainly bring the soul to eternal death, *Rom.* vi. 23.; it hath brought many to hell, and it will certainly bring all others to the same condition, that live and die in it unhealed. He that dies in his sin, shall die for ever.

II. For the nature of this sickness. 'Tis a more dreadful sickness than any other sickness : I shall set it out in a few particulars.

(1.) *It seizeth upon the most noble parts of man.* All other sickness only infest the body, but sin is a disease in the soul. Those sicknesses are most painful, and most mortal, which seize upon the vitals and inward parts. A disease that feeds upon the spirits, soon drinks up the natural moisture, and is not easily cured : sin is a disease that doth immediately reach the spirits ; 'tis the sickness of the heart. *O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved,* Jer. iv. 14. The Apostle, it's true, speaks of the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, 2 Cor. vii. 1. Some sins are only acted by the brutish, fleshly, and sensitive part ; others rest in the spirit, as pride, vain-glory, envy, &c. : yet notwithstanding, even those filthiness of the flesh, have their chief seat and residence in the heart, according to that of our Saviour, Mat. xv. 19. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, &c.* All sin is *spiritual wickedness*, in it's fountain and root : as grace is seated in the heart, so also is sin, Jer. iv. 18. *This is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thy heart.*

(2.) *Sin is a sickness which God never made.* All bodily diseases are the work of God : he created plagues, fevers, consumptions, &c. Amos iii. 6. But sin is a sickness, of which God never was the author. 'Tis true, God sometimes punisheth sin by sin ; not by creating sin, but by suffering a sinful creature to fill up his sin, by withdrawing, or denying his grace, which only can preserve from sin.

(3.) *Sin is a sickness, which separates between God and men.* No other disease can divide between God and the soul. *Hezekiah's plague, Asa's gout, Job's sores* : none of all these did make any division between God and them. Some sickness does separate between the husband and the wife, the father and the child ; at least, in actual communion, though not in affection ; but no bodily sickness divides between God and men : yet sin separates between God and the soul, Isa. lix. 2. : it makes God stand at a distance from his own children, to hide his face from them, and to deal with them as with enemies.

(4.) *Sin is the cause of all other sickness.* All bodily dis-

eases come from this disease. *Hast thou not procured this unto thyself? Thine own doings shall correct thee, &c.* Jer. ii. 19. A distempered soul is the true cause of a distempered body. Sin was the first disease that ever was in the world, and the cause of all that ever followed.

(5.) *Sin is a disease that cannot be cured, by any natural medicine in the world.* No drug in the apothecaries' shop is able to heal this disease, Jer. ii. 22. *Though thou wash thee with nitre, and make thyself ever so clean, &c.* There is no bodily disease, but there is something in nature, if it could be found out, able by God's ordinary blessing to cure it; but there is nothing in nature can heal sin: there is but one medicine in all the world, able to cure a diseased soul; and that is the blood of Jesus Christ.

(6.) *Sin is the most loathsome disease in all the world, and the most infectious.* The small pox, the pestilence, the leprosy; these are delightful, pleasant diseases, in comparison of sin. Sin doth pollute every thing it comes near; it pollutes the conscience, the ordinances, relations, persons, nations. If it were possible, that one drop of sin could enter Heaven, it would turn Heaven into Hell: it's compared, in Scripture, to all loathsome things; 'tis compared to the plague of pestilence and of leprosy, 1 Kings, viii. 38.; the leprosy of the law was a type of it: it's compared to poison, Ps. cxl. 3.; to the vomit of a dog, 2 Pet. ii. 22.; it's called filthiness, abomination, lewdness. All the things that are loathsome in the world, are used in Scripture, to shadow out the loathsomeness of sin.

(7.) *Sin is a propagating disease;* not only because it spreads over the whole man, but extends to posterity; it descends from parents to children. Some bodily diseases, are hereditary; yet not so hereditary, but that some children escape them: but this is a sickness, that conveys itself to all posterity; this sickness is interwoven in the very essence of a person, which he doth, together with his being, communicate to all his seed. As a man begets a man, so doth he beget a diseased man. Enosh.

THE USES OF THIS.

1. *Oh the multitude of sick persons that are in the world!* There is not one person living, but is less or more troubled with this sickness. The world is nothing but an hospital

of sick persons : there is not a family in which this plague of sin is not. In many things we offend all : the root of the matter is in the best of us. Isa. lxiv. 6.

II. *What is the reason that there are no more cryings out of this sickness?* Sin is a sickness, and yet few bewail it : other sickness are lamented. You cannot meet in any company, but you shall hear men cry out of their sickness. One man of his gout, another of his stone, another of his consumption, &c. but few speaks of sin : the reason is, because sin is a spiritual disease, and so not discerned, but by grace. And this is, indeed, the dreadfulfulness of this sickness, that it kills many before they feel it ; it sends men to hell before they know themselves to be sick. 'Tis with sinners as with the drunkard in Prov. xxiii. 35. *They have stricken me, and I was not sick.*

III. *They are not your enemies, that are solicitous to keep you from sin.* Naturally we account them our friends, which would prevent us from painful diseases ; and yet we naturally account them our enemies, who would prevent us from falling into sin. I hate him, saith Ahab, of Michaiiah, 1 Kings, xxii. 8. : a wicked man hates none so much as those that would preserve him from sin. Well, whatever you think, they are your best friends ; and that you will acknowledge another day. If you should be at the door of an infected house, ready to go in, and one should whisper you in the ear, Sir, the plague is in that house, have a care of yourself ; would you reproach him ? Nay, would you not thank him ? Why then, will you think them your enemies, that would preserve you from sin ? They know, the dreadfulfulness of this sickness, and they would preserve others from falling into it : David blesses God for Abigail, and gives her many thanks, for her great care of him, 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. God sets it down for friendship ; and whether you be saved or damned, you will clearly see it another day.

IV. *Watch against sin, as you watch against sickness.* How cautious are many men of their bodily health ? They will eat and drink nothing that may prejudice their health. If they know any thing, that will disturb the quiet of their bodies, they will not middle with it, though their affection be ever so much inclined to it. And why will you not be as cautious of sin ? Take heed to yourselves ; remember,

swearing is a sickness, lying is a disease, pride is a sickness, &c. Avoid all occasions of sin, all temptations, pray against it, watch against it: sin is a sickness, that will keep you out of Heaven; and will probably provoke God to hate you. Keep sin out of your family: let not liars, swearers, drunkards, &c. lodge a night under your roof, Psl. ci. 7. No sickness is so catching as sin is. All men have the root of it, an inclination to it in their hearts. Preserve your children from this sickness; 'tis worse than the small-pox, worse than the plague: other diseases will kill the bodies of your children; sin will kill both body and soul. Keep watch and ward over your hearts, over your families, that sin may not enter thither, nor that any of your's may go where this catching sickness is.

V. *What cause have they to bless God, that are cured of this disease?* We are never perfectly cured of it till we come to Heaven; we shall have some grudgings of it, while we live here; but when sin is pardoned, then 'tis healed, Psl. ciii. 3. When grace is thoroughly wrought, then is sin healed; 'tis healed as to the guilt of it, that is done away; 'tis healed as to the damnation of it; 'tis the reigning sin, that is the damning sin; and 'tis healed in part, as to the pollution and filthiness of it: 'tis in a sure speedy way of healing. How glad are men, when they are healed of old diseases! A man that hath been troubled with the stone, gout, or headache for many years, how glad, how thankful is he when he is recovered? He will be telling every one of the man, and of the medicine that cured him. Let them, whose spiritual sickness God has healed, be very thankful and bless his name-

David calls upon his soul to praise God, for this kindness, Psl. ciii. *int.* Though you be full of other infirmities, yet be of good cheer, the damning sickness is healed; 'tis better to have a healthy soul in a crazy body, than to have a sound body and a diseased soul; and shew your thankfulness for healing, by being careful to prevent recidivations into sin again. Take the counsel of Christ to that man, that was lately cured of his infirmity, of which he had smarted thirty-eight years, Joh. v. 14. *Thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* 'Tis a slighting of your Physician, and a vilifying of your disease, not to

be as careful as you can, that you may not relapse ; and know this, for the increasing of your thankfulness, that when this disease is once cured, all your diseases are cured ; they are cured, as to the malignity, and the hurt of them ; they cannot destroy you, though they may disquiet you. *The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick : the people that dwell therein, shall be forgiven their injury, Isa. xxxiii. ult.* The peril and dreadfulness of other diseases, depend upon this ; and when this is removed, the evil of all the rest is removed also.

Doct. II. *That Jcsus Christ is a Physician for the healing of these spiritual diseases.* Christ is a Physician to the body, as well as to the soul : he heals the wounds and sores of the outward, as well as of the inward man : we read, that in the days of his flesh, he cured immediately sometimes, and sometimes by the use of means, many bodily maladies. Such as were possessed with devils, such as had the palsy, such as were leprous, such as had fevers, such as laboured under several other diseases, were brought unto him, and he healed them, Luk. vi. 17, 18, 19. and Mat. viii. 14, 15, 16. he healed many that were incurable : when other Physicians had given them over, they were brought to Christ, and he healed them, Luk. viii. 43. Concerning the woman sick of a bloody issue, she had spent all her living upon Physicians, and could not be healed of any ; and yet, by the touch of Christ's garment, her bloody issue was staunched. He cured a man that had an infirmity thirty-eight years, Joh. v. 5. : yea, he healed those that brought their diseases with them into the world. One that was born blind, was recovered to sight by him, Joh. ix. 6, 7. The Text saith, *He healed all manner of diseases*, Mat. iv. 23. ; and he doth still heal bodily diseases. In three respects, he is a Physician to the body.

(1.) *He created all those simples that are useful for cure.* Every herb, plant, mineral, and whatsoever in *rerum naturâ*, is medicinal and physical, was created by the Lord Christ ; and whatsoever was created by him, is preserved by him, Gen. ii. 5. Nothing sprung up of itself ; the roots of all healing herbs were set by his hand, and by his providential care, they are kept from perishing to this very day.

(2.) *He it is that gave, and still gives skill unto Physicians, to make use of those materials.* All arts and sciences

are his invention. What is said of *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, Exod. xxxi. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. is as true of all other more noble arts. Men by study, could never have such insight into the secrets of nature, if Jesus Christ did not instruct them. He enables them to know diseases, and what is proper and suitable for those diseases. He that is the Lord of Nature, doth discover the secrets of nature in men, when they study them: he teaches them how to mingle and compound several simples together, to make an apt medicine, (*charismata iamatou*,) 1 Cor. xii. 9. Christ is the Father of all arts and artists: if he hide skill from the Physician, the Physician can never find out the disease, nor prescribe a fit medicine to remove it.

(3.) *He blesseth the applications that are made.* The most proper and apt medicine that ever was prescribed by man, needs the blessing of Christ to make it effectual. *As man liveth not by bread, but by the word of blessing*, Mat. iv. 4. So neither is man cured by physic alone, but by the benediction of Christ, upon the using of physic: he suspends the operation and efficacy of medicines, when he pleaseth; and when it is his will, they are salutiferous and healing. Thus is he a Physician to the outward man.

But his chief subject is the soul: he is in an especial manner, a Physician to that: he doth, several times, in the Gospel, compare himself to a Physician. In this Text, and in Mar. ii. 17. we have the same comparison, Luk. iv. 23. He was prophesied of before his incarnation, as a Physician. Isa. lxi. 1. Binding up is the work of a healer. Christ was sent into the world to be a binder up of the broken in heart. The Prophet *Malachi*, speaks of him as a spiritual Physician, iv. 2. *The Son of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his wings.* This is that which is held out in the Gospel, in that parable of the wounded man and the *Samaritan*, Luk. x. 30, 31, &c. Jesus Christ is that *Samaritan*, who doth by that parable preach himself to be a Physician of souls.

In the handling of this Doctrine, I shall open three things.

I. That Christ is a Physician.

II. How Christ heals sin-sick souls.

III. The excellency of Christ above other Physicians.

I. That Christ is a spiritual Physician. This is manifest.

I. *You may see his commission.* God authorized him with power. The Prophet asserts this, Isa. lxi. 1. *He hath anointed me to bind up the broken-hearted.* This prophecy is applied to Christ, Luk. iv. 18. God hath given Christ his *Gratiam ad practicandum*. Those that are Physician's amongst men, must receive commission to practice before they ought to use that art. The bodies of men are of that worth, that in all well-ordered kingdoms and commonwealths, none are permitted to profess the art of physic, till they be tried by such as have skill, and enabled by public authority, to exercise that faculty; hereby professed Physician are distinguished from illiterate, and cheating mountebanks. Now God hath conferred on Jesus Christ under hand and seal, full authority to be a spiritual Physician to heal the souls of men: and therefore it is, that all are invited to come to him for cure, Matt. xi. 28. *Come unto me, &c.*

II. *Christ hath ability as well as authority.* Whatsoever is requisite for the healing of souls, is to be found in Jesus Christ. This the Prophet expressly affirms, Mal. iv. 2. *The Son of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings.* Healing is a large word; the Geneva translation reads it, health shall be under his wings. Now there could not be health or healing under Christ's wings, if there were not in him, whatsoever is necessary to health or spiritual healing.

The Apostle saith, *That it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. i. 19. Christ is a garden so well furnished, that there is in him every root that is requisite, to make a spiritual medicine. He hath a purging, a strengthening, a comforting, a cheering, and a quickening virtue. There is that in him, which is proper for all diseases. The Evangelist tells us, that when sick persons resorted to Christ, in the days of his flesh, there went *virtue out of him*, and *healed them all*, Luk. xvi. 19. (*dunamis ex-ercheto*,) no virtue could have gone out of him, if all virtue had not been treasured up in him. Christ hath eye-salve for blind eyes, mollifying grace for hard hearts, enlivening grace for dead souls, humbling grace for proud minds. God hath given him fulness of all things necessary for sick souls, and wisdom to apply the same for the benefit of those that repair to him.

II. How Christ heals spiritual diseases.

(1.) *He heals by justification.* Sin brings guilt, Lev. v. 2, 3, 4, 5, Rom. iii. 19. Every sin makes the creature liable to wrath: this guilt is removed by the grace of justification. Jesus Christ applies his spotless and perfect righteousness to the soul, and thereby actually removes the guilt of sin, and makes the sinner as pure in the sight of God, as if he had never offended. Of this the Apostle speaks, Rom. v. 18, 19. This is called in Scripture, the covering of sin, Psl. xxxii. 1, 2. *Blessed is the man whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.* Christ draws the veil or garment of his own merit and obedience, over the spotted soul of a sinner, and thereby covers all his guilt. In this respect, a sinner is perfectly healed; though sin abide in him, yet the guilt is taken away, so that it shall never rebound upon the person for condemnation. Hence it is, that God is said, *not to behold iniquity in his people*, Numb. xxiii. 21. Of this healing, the *Psalmist* speaks, Psl. ciii. 3. *Who forgiveth all thy iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.* Of this healing, we are to understand, that in 2 Chron. xxx. 20. *The Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.* He did not reckon, nor impute the guilt of that sin, to the people.

(2.) *He heals the soul by sanctification.* Every sin hath filthiness in it, as well as guilt. It is of a defiling nature, and leaveth defilement upon the soul of the sinner, Mat. xv. 11. Hence it is, that sinners are said to be *filthy creatures*, Rev. xxii. 11. and Psl. xiv. 3.; they are *altogether become filthy*. This is called *Macula*, or *labes peccati*. the spot or stain of sin, Corruption, pollution, &c. It doth immediately follow every offence of sin, and remains when the act of sin is over. Look at waters, when they break their banks and overflow the earth; they leave a filthy slime and sediment behind them; so all sinful acts leave upon the soul, a filthy slime of corruption. This filthiness Jesus Christ heals by sanctification: he doth by his spirit, plant the seeds of grace in the heart; he maketh the soul partaker of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.; he causeth all *old things to pass away, and all things to become new*, 2 Cor. v. 16.; he *writeth his laws in the heart* of the sinner, Jer. xxxi. 33.; he *sprinkleth clean water* upon the sinner, whereby he is *cleansed from all his defilements*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25.; and by this means, the filthiness of sin is healed. This sanctification hath two parts; the one is *mortification*, whereby the body of sin is wasted

Rom. viii. 13. and Col. iii. 3, 5. ; the other is *regeneration*, or the *spiritual resurrection* ; whereby, the inward man is strengthened and renewed from day to day : the one is the putting off the old man, the other is the putting on the new man. Now although the sinner is not healed perfectly, and at once, of the filthiness of sin by sanctification, as he is of the guilt of sin, in regard of justification, because this is a real change, and therefore it's carried on successively and gradually ; whereas, justification is only a relative change, and therefore is perfect at once ; yet, he is in so sure and certain a way of healing, that Jesus Christ will never let him go out of his hands, till he be fully cured. He is perfectly healed, in respect of parts already, and he shall be perfectly healed in respect of degrees ; he shall see the day when there shall not be the least speck of sin or filth, either upon the soul or body.

III. The excellency of this Physician, above all other Physicians. This appears in many respects.

(1.) *In regard of the subject.* Other Physicians have to deal only with the body : all their business lies in the temper, constitution, parts of the body, in preventing, or removing diseases, that annoy the outward man : their line reacheth no farther. The soul is not the object or subject of the Physician's art : but now, the chief part about which Christ is employed, is the soul, the conscience, the affections, the inward man : he heals the distempers of the heart, which other Physicians, as Physicians, can neither know or heal, Isa. lxi. 1.

(2.) *Jesus Christ is a Physician for all diseases.* There are some diseases, which are *approbria medicorum* ; no Physician in the world is able to cure them. But Jesus Christ can cure all diseases ; all kinds of diseases, and every individual disease : he knows the cause of every disease, and therefore he can cure all. Some Physicians, though they have a general skill in all diseases, yet their excellency lies sometimes in one or two, which they have studied more than others, and about which they have been employed more than in others. As some Divines are better versed in some one or two controversies than others, so, &c. But Christ, he is as exact in all spiritual diseases, as he is in any disease. He is as good for the diseases in the head, as for those in the heart ; and for those in the affections, as for those in the head : he can cure ignorance, pride, unbelief, discontent,

impatience, hardness of heart, &c. ; and he can cure one as well as another, that is, he can cure all. Christ never met with a spiritual distemper, which he was not able to call by it's right name, and to prescribe a fit medicine for. It's said of him in the Gospel, that he cured all manner of diseases, Joh. v. 4. : he can cure all manner of spiritual diseases.

(3.) *Jesus Christ can give no hurtful medicine.* The most learned Physician in the world knowing, but in part, may prescribe something, which is not proper for the disease ; unless he had spectacles to see into the body, he may err ; but Christ cannot be mistaken. He never appointed any thing but what was fit ; yea, nothing but what was best for the patient's condition. And, indeed, Christ's physic is therefore proper, because he prescribes it. Other Physician's appoint such receipts, because they are proper ; but Christ's receipts are proper, because he prescribes them. If he will use a plaister of clay and spittle, it is therefore right, because he will use it, Joh. ix. 6. That which would have made a seeing man blind, if it had been done by a man, will make a blind man see, when it is done by Christ.

(4.) *Jesus Christ heals speedily.* Other Physicians are long in healing. We use to say, diseases come on horse-back, but go away on foot. No Physician can cure in a moment : they must observe method. A cure over-hastened may be as prejudicial to the patient, as a disease neglected ; but Christ can heal in an instant. Many a diseased sinner, who hath labored for many years, under many spiritual distempers, have been cured by Jesus Christ, in a trice of time. We read in the Gospel, that Christ did immediately cure some, that had labored a long time under diseases, in a moment. *Take up thy bed and walk*, Mat. viii. 3. ; *immediately his leprosy was healed*, Mat. xx. 34. ; *immediately their eyes received sight*, Mar. i. 31. ; *immediately the fever left her*, and many instances of like nature. Immediate cures are not the acts of creatures, though ever so learned, ever so wise. Many a dead, lame, blind, impenitent sinner, hath come sick into the Church, and gone out whole. When Christ pleases, he can heal presently.

(5.) *Christ can bless his physic.* He can make it effectual for what he pleaseth : no Physician in the world is able to do it : he applies physic, but he cannot say, this shall cure it : he must seek a blessing from Christ. The efficacy of

that which other Physicians prescribe, doth depend upon the suitableness of it, and principally upon Christ's blessing; but the efficacy of Christ's physic, depends upon his application. Christ can say peremptorily, I will remove such a spiritual distemper. The leper acknowledgeth this, Mat. viii. 2. *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* I will, saith Christ, *be thou clean, &c.* He hath all spiritual diseases at his back: the Centurion acknowledgeth it, *Do but speak the word, and my servant shall be healed, &c.* Mat. viii. 8. If Christ say to impenitency, to unbelief, &c. *be healed*; they will be healed: if Christ say, I will by such a Sermon heal such a sinner, the work will be done: his word is sure enough for any disease.

(6.) *Christ heals the poor as well as the rich.* Many Physicians do not care to take poor patients in hand; but Jesus Christ is as willing to visit and heal the poor as well as the rich. He is as ready to go to the beggar on the dunghill, as to the King on the throne. Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh, was as ready to heal the servant as the master, Luk. xviii. 35, 36. The noble and ignoble, the great and the small are all alike to him. Christ looks not on outward qualities, but at spiritual distempers.

(7.) *Christ heals all freely.* Other Physicians take rewards; 'tis their calling, and they ought to live upon their calling: many of them are very exacting; if they have not a daily fee, they care not for visiting. The Gospel speaks of one that had *spent all her living on Physicians*, Luk. viii. 43. But now Christ takes nothing from his patients, whether they be rich or poor; he gives them their physic freely: nay, he gives rewards to all his patients. Other Physicians receive from their patients, but here the patients receive from the Physician: he provides meat, drink, and attendants for all his patients. Christ is a nurse, as well as a Physician: you may see this in that parable, Luk. x. 34, 35. Physicians are not bound to take care of their patients in this sense, but Christ doth.

(8.) *Christ offers himself.* Other Physicians stay till they be sent for. No sick man expects a Physician till he be called he is glad if he can see him then; but Christ comes without calling; indeed he would never come, if he did not come without a call: the sick soul would die before he would send for Christ. Other Physicians are intreated to

come to the sick, but here the sick are intreated to come to the Physician, Mat. xi. 28. The work of the Ministry is to beseech sinners, that they would be healed, 2 Cor. v. 20. *Jesus Christ came to seek and to save, that which was lost; first to seek, then to save them.*

(9.) *Christ doth not depart, though he be reviled, &c.* Other Physicians absent themselves, if they be unkindly used: who would expect a Physician should come daily, to one that reproaches and reviles him; yea, to one that shuts the door on him, when he comes; much less, to one that beats him, &c.? The sick sinner useth Christ uncivilly, discourteously, frowns on him, shuts the door on him, reviles him, beats him, and stones him; and yet the Physician will not depart; though he seems to be angry, and to withdraw for a time, yet returns again. Christ will put up with a thousand abuses, rather than suffer one of his elect to die in their sins. Though Christ see, that we throw his physic into his face, and that we tear and burn his bills in his presence; that we send for empirics, and prefer their advice before his, yet he waits with patience, and will not be driven away, by the worst usage.

(10.) *Christ himself is the sick man's physic.* Other Physicians do not heal their patients with their own flesh, but Christ doth. Other Physicians do sometimes take away the blood of their patients, but Christ let's blood himself to heal his patients: *by his stripes we are healed*, Isa. liii. 5. Christ makes a wound in himself, to heal our wounds: the Physician dies to save the patient's life from the grave. *To him that loved us, and washed away our sins with his blood*, Rev. i. 5. Neither the guilt nor filth of one sin would have been removed, if the Physician's blood had not been shed for it.

(11.) *Christ is a Surgeon, as well as a Physician; (iatros)* comprehends both.

THE USES.

I. *That Christ will kindly accept all endeavours of men, for the healing of the spiritual distempers of their brethren.* He is a Physician for spiritual sores; and those are most like him that desire to heal and dress such sores as these are.

II. *Let men bring their souls to Christ, desperet nemo.* Present yourselves before Christ: he is a Physician: yea, he in-

deed is the only Physician: all others are mere empirics and mountebanks; they will cheat you, they cannot heal you. Those that would send you to works, to duties, to Angels, &c. they are destroyers of your souls. Here is good news for a sick world, that Christ is a Physician; lay all your diseases before him: see how men did for their bodily diseases, Mat. iv. 24. Do so by your spiritual diseases; bring your ignorant hearts, proud hearts, impatient hearts, covetous hearts, &c. and lay them at Christ's feet, &c.: here is Christ's pool where he heals.

I shall lay down for the encouragement of sinners, five arguments against despair of being healed; viz.

I. *How many Christ hath cured.* Thousands and Ten Thousands are now in Heaven, that have been as sick as thou canst be.

II. *Christ is still in a way of curing.* His hand is in: indeed, his hand is never out.

III. *He hath undertaken to cure all thy diseases.* He hath given the hand to his Father.

IV. *He hath healed them already.* He hath done that which will heal you: he hath shed his blood; he hath poured out his spirit, &c.

V, *He is related to you.* Your brother, your kinsman, your husband, your head, a part of yourself. If a sick man had a brother, or husband, a Physician, which could cure him, would he despair, &c.? Why should a sick Christian despair of cure, whose husband is such a Physician?

Obj. I. But I have many diseases upon me, what hope shall I have?

Sol. Christ can cure all manner of diseases. He cured *Paul*, a blasphemer, &c.; he cured *Mary Magdalen*; he cured *Manasseth*, &c. Let thy disease be what it will, so Christ be thy Physician.

Obj. II. But my diseases have been long upon me, what hope shall I have?

Sol. Christ can cure long diseases; he cured one that was eighteen years diseased, Luk. xiii. 16.; another, that had been sick thirty-eight years, Joh. v. 5.: all the diseases he cures, are old diseases: the original fountain of all is, from the fall of *Adam*.

Obj. III. But I have relapsed, &c.: what hopes shall I have?

Sol. There is a peculiar promise for this disease, Hos. xiv. 4. *Peter* relapsed, and Christ healed him, &c. Whatever your diseases are, if you will be willing to be cured, Christ is willing to heal you. Only you must,

(1.) Take Christ's counsel; follow his direction: never any miscarried, that took Christ's advice.

(2.) Keep back no disease: let him heal all, or he will heal none. Oh that Christ might get some custom with you this day.

Obj. IV. But I am worse since Christ took me in hand, &c.

Sol. (1.) Thou art so much the better, because thou thinkest thyself worse: if it be thy complaint that thou art worse.

(2.) Let Christ alone with the cure; he goes the safest, yea, the nearest, when he seems to go the farthest way.

(3.) *Take notice of the all-sufficiency of Christ.* He is every thing to the soul which it wants. The soul wants bread, Christ is that; the soul wants drink, Christ is that; the soul wants raiment, Christ is that; the soul wants a shadow, Christ is that; the soul wants a Physician, and Christ is a Physician; not a mountebank, but a learned skilful Physician. The soul that hath Christ, hath every thing. One Jesus Christ is enough for all the necessities of the soul.

(4.) *What comfort is this for the children of God!* We get new falls every day; we breed new diseases every day; we contract new guilt, new filth. Christ is a Physician, he hath healing in his wings; he can cure your deadness, dullness, hardness, blindness, &c.: he is a compassionate Physician; he is touched with the sense of your infirmities, Heb. iv. 15. Get nearer and nearer to Christ; get farther under his healing wings, &c.

(5.) *Rob not Christ of the honour of this doctrine.* Christ is robbed of the honour of a Physician, two ways.

I. When we go to other Physicians, to creatures, to duties, to carnal mirth, &c. all which are Physicians of no value.

II. When we attribute our spiritual healing to ourselves, or any creature, and not to Christ. He that robs Christ of

the honour of a Physician, shall, when he is sick, perhaps, want a physician.

Doct. III. *That there are many sick of this spiritual disease, who think themselves whole.* As in regard of the body, many that are very full of diseases, judge themselves healthy and strong; so very many there are, who are mortally sick of spiritual maladies, and yet conceive themselves in perfect health. As many that are spiritually healed, think themselves sick unto death; so many that are spiritually sick unto death, judge themselves in a healthful state. Thus it was with the vain-glorious Pharisee, Luk. xviii. 11.; he thought himself perfectly in health; when, he was ready to drop into his grave; yea, to fall into hell, through the abundance of his spiritual sickness. Thus it was with those other Pharisees, Joh. ix. 39, 40. Our Saviour hints their sad condition to them, v. 39.; they imagined themselves unconcerned, in what was spoken: *Are we also blind? q. d.* our eyes are as clear as the eyes of any in the world; we are far from blindness. They thought themselves to see as perfectly as any, v. 40. Thus was it with the Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. iii. 17.: she thought her condition as good as the best in the world, when she was indeed, as sad a spectacle as the earth bore: experience shews it to be so still; and that with the greatest part of men in the world. Come to men, that are grossly profane, tell them of their dangerous condition; ask them, why they will not think of another course, &c. What is their answer? Trouble not yourself about us, we are well, our condition is good, we hope to be saved, as well as you that are so strict and zealous; Heaven belongs to us, as well as to you, &c.

But whence comes this to pass? I shall reduce all to these heads or springs.

I. Ignorance. The greatest part of men are grossly ignorant of their spiritual state: they know not, they do not understand their inward state. The Scripture tells us, that a carnal condition, is an ignorant condition, Eph. iv. 18. 1 Pet. i. 14.: a carnal heart is spiritually; an ignorant and blind heart. The state of nature, is called a state of darkness, Acts xxvi. 18.; and a state of folly, Prov. v. 23.; and all such men, are called spiritual fools, Ps. xiv. 1. They may know much in outward things, and much of the letter of the Scripture; but as to saving knowledge, they are very

ignorant, and without understanding: and as they are ignorant of other matters, so of their spiritual condition. This ignorance is to be ascribed to these four heads.

(1.) *They want the Spirit of God.* The Holy Spirit is the principle of all saving light: it is called by the Apostle, *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation*, Eph. i. 17.; because all true wisdom and saving illumination is the work of the Spirit; the Spirit gives us power to discern, and light to see spiritual things. Pregnancy of natural wit without the Spirit of God, can never make a person wise unto salvation. *Elihu* tells *Job*, xxxii. 8. *There is a Spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty, giveth him wisdom.* He that wants this Spirit, cannot possibly know his spiritual state. But how many men, yea, all unregenerate men, want this Spirit: this the Apostle largely exhibiteth, in 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

(2.) *They do not search into their own hearts.* He that would know his spiritual condition, must carefully and conscientiously dive into his own spirit, by serious examination of himself: he must turn his eyes inward: this the Apostle tells us, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. (*eauttons peirazete dokimazete.*) We must pierce through our own hearts, before we can see whether they be sound or rotten; we must prove ourselves, as the goldsmith doth his metal, whether it be right or not; we must cast our hearts into the fire, and bring them to the touchstone, &c. He that is not a self-visitor, a self-examiner, can never attain to any competent knowledge of himself. Now, there are many men, who never did spend one hour in the trial of themselves, they are as great strangers to their own hearts, as they are to foreign countries; this makes them ignorant.

(3.) *They do not consult with this spiritual Physician.* Jesus Christ is the great principal Physician. Under Christ the Ministers of the Gospel are Physicians, 2 Cor. vi. 1. (*sunergountes.*) 'Tis their office to be helpers of God's people in their spiritual condition; and 'tis the duty of the servants of God, to consult them about the state of their souls, Mal. ii. 6.: 'tis not only to be understood of public preaching, but of private conference: they are to discover their spiritual state to the Ministers of Christ, that they may help them in knowing what they do not understand, and in healing those distempers, which they have discovered: we

are not to rest upon their bare opinion ; no, we must seek the law at his mouth : if they say any thing without the law, or beside the law, they are not to be heard : they must judge according to Scripture, otherwise they are not to be heard. But yet, by advising with them, some light and knowledge of our spiritual condition, may be attained from the rules of Scripture. They are spiritual *Seers*, in their model and measure, as the Prophets of old were, 2 Kings xvii. 13. : as they help men, by the direction of the Word of God, to know what they are to do, and what they are to believe ; so they may be very beneficial, by comparing the spiritual state of men with the rule, to help them to a better, and more perfect knowledge of themselves, than they had before. But now the greatest part of men neglect this : men generally go to the Lawyer, to be informed about their outward state ; they go to the bodily Physician, to be helped in the knowledge of their corporeal state ; but they never made conscience of enquiring of the state of their souls, at the mouth of the spiritual Physician. This makes them so ignorant ; and because they are ignorant, they think their condition good, when 'tis bad and miserable.

(4.) *They consult with mountebanks*, which are weak or flattering.

II. *Pride*. Man is naturally a very proud swelling creature, willing to see what may make him excellent, unwilling to acknowledge anything in himself, that may render him contemptible, either in his own eyes, or in the eyes of others. *Simon Magus*, the sorcerer, gave out that himself was *some great one*, Acts viii. 9. : he would be (*me-gas tis*.) All men, by nature, have a spice of that disease. How comes it to pass else, that men are so impatient to bear rebuke, that they are so unwilling to be instructed, that they are so averse to have their spiritual condition searched, that they are so raging under affliction ? Is it not because of that pride and conceitedness, that is in their hearts ? Hence also is it, that though they be sick unto death, yet they judge themselves to be in a sound, healthy saving condition ; lest by acknowledging their spiritual sickness, they should be laid low in the thoughts of men. See how proudly the Jews spoke to Christ, when he would convince them of their spiritual bondage, Joh. viii. 33. *We are Abraham's children ; and how sayest thou, ye shall be made free ?* They thought it a mighty injury, to a people of their quality, to be told

of bondage and subjection. 'Tis want of humility, that makes sinful men hold such groundless conclusions, about their spiritual welfare.

III. *Love of ease.* Men naturally love their ease and quiet: they would not be disturbed. *Issachar saw that rest was good, and therefore he couched down between two burdens,* Gen. xlix. 14, 15. Most men are for spirituals, as Issachar was for his outward condition; they prefer an unsafe rest, before a safe unquietness: they know, that if once they see, or acknowledge themselves to be spiritually sick, they must enter into a course of spiritual physic: they must take down many a bitter potion, which they do not like; therefore, they conclude that they are whole. As it is with many foolish men, in regard of their bodies, though they be sick of many diseases, yet they had rather say, they are well, than meddle with physic; they willingly cast the thoughts of their diseases behind their back, that they may not be at the trouble and cost of curing. Just so it is with spiritual sick men: if they should say, they are sick, then they must make use of means; they must pray and repent, their sins must be purged out, they must have some spiritual disturbance, &c. This they love not; therefore, they conclude they are whole, and often drop down into hell, before they will acknowledge that they stand in need of physic. *Soul take thy ease,* saith that rich fool in the Gospel, *eat, drink, &c.* Luk. xii. 19. This love of *painful ease*, (for so it will prove in the end) is the bane and ruin of thousands of souls.

IV. *They judge of their spiritual state by false rules.* 'Tis very sad to consider what groundless, rotten foundations, men build hopes of heaven upon. Our Saviour speaks of two sorts of builders in the Gospel, under which all the sons of men are comprehended; the one builds his house upon a rock, the other upon the sand, Mat. vii. 24, 25, 26, 27. Every man is a builder, and every man builds his salvation, either upon the rock, or upon the sand. Most men build upon the sand, conclude themselves to be well, upon such arguments as will not hold in the day of trial. I shall both discover them, and shew the rottenness of them.

(1.) *False Rule.* *Freedom from scandalous flagitious sins.* Many men think they are spiritually whole, because they are not sick of those visible desperate diseases which other sinners have upon them: they are neither thieves, whores

drunkards, oppressors, cheaters, nor murderers, &c.; they live soberly, civilly, orderly among men, no man can charge them with any enormous act: hereupon, they gather that they are spiritually whole, that they have no mortal disease upon them; this was the ground of that misjudgment which the Pharisee made of himself, Luk. xviii. 11. *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men, &c.* It's very like the Pharisee spake no more than what was true, for they were generally men very inoffensive as to all such things. For the discovering of this false foundation, I shall lay down four thing, viz.

I. *'Tis a very great mercy to be freed from these scandalous sins.* If God has preserved you from these visible diseases, that you have none of these blotches of *Egypt* upon you, it is to be acknowledged as a very great blessing. The Pharisee did not wrong in blessing God, that he was no extortioner; had he done it upon a right ground, if he had not gone on to censure the Publican, he had not been blamed, but commended for it. *David* blesses God for preserving him from the sin of murder, upon *Abigail's* persuasion. 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.: and there is very great reason for it; for

(1.) *Hereby we are delivered from much anguish, and torment of conscience.* These scandalous sins, as they do, in an extraordinary manner, waste the conscience, so they lay a foundation of much horror, and trouble in the soul: every sin creates much torment; but these great abominations create exceedingly much. What horror did *David's* adultery and murder cast into his spirit! Though God pardoned both to him, yet he was filled with anguish, a long time after, Psl. vi. & xxxviii. and Psl. l. 1. Now, 'tis a great mercy, when God prevents any anguish.

(2.) *Hereby we are delivered, from being hurtful examples to other men.* Gross scandalous offences are very prejudicial to others: the hearts of those that are good, are grieved; and such as are wicked, are caused to stumble oftentimes to their eternal ruin. *David's* sin gave great occasion of sin to others. Now, it's a great mercy, when God keeps a person from being an instrument of hurt to others, especially of hurt to their souls.

II. *Such as expect salvation, must keep themselves from such wickedness,* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Heaven is not a place of

common receipt for good and bad ; 'tis not like your ordinary Inns, which lodge all kind of passengers without difference ; such lepers so living and dying, must expect to go to another place, Rev. xxii. 15. *Without shall be dogs, &c.*

III. *'Tis possible for a person to be free from these abominations, and yet be mortally sick of spiritual diseases.* Every man hath not the plague : a man may die of a consumption as well as of a fever. A person may be in a damnable state, that never committed murder, or uncleanness.

(1.) *The Pharisee was free from all these impieties, and yet deadly sick in his soul, Luk. xviii. 11.* Paul when he was a Pharisee, was blameless, concerning all such enormities, Phil. iii. 6 ; and yet, at that time sick even unto death ; so in Mat. xxii. 11. the five Virgins, Mat. xxv. 1., and those in 2 Pet. ii. 18, 20. A natural conscience, may keep men from such enormities : the penalty of human laws may preserve men from these great wickednesses. Civil education may preserve a man from falling into these wickednesses. A desire to keep our reputation in the world with men, with whom we converse, may keep us from these high impieties. Mere restraint may do this.

(2.) *If freedom from these offences, were enough to proclaim men to be spiritually whole, then no hypocrite should be sick.* A man must be free from all these sins, before he be advanced into the hypocrite's form. Now we know, that every hypocrite is spiritually and mortally sick : yea, the Scripture tells us, that hell is prepared for the hypocrites ; other sinners are said to have their portion with the hypocrites, Mat. xxiv. 51. The hypocrite is of all sinners the special proprietor of hell, and yet he is free from all these offences.

(3) *It's possible for one that hath no saving grace in his heart, to be free from these offences.* Though every one that hath grace, will abandon these sins, yet every one that is free from these sins, hath not grace ; the instances mentioned before, will prove this. But every one that wants saving grace, is under the rage of spiritual sickness : yea, he that is without true grace, is not only sick in sin, but dead in sin, Eph. ii. 1. And yet those that are dead in sin, may be free from these wickednesses.

(4.) *Although many be free from the actual commission*

of these sins, yet they have the roots of these sins in their hearts. Every sin is in that bundle of sin, which we call original: there is pride, murder, theft, &c. Now the pollution of nature, if it be not healed by justifying grace, pardoning mercy, and sanctifying grace, is enough to make the soul sick, and that unto death: yea, indeed, the great sickness of the soul lies there: there lies the strength of sin, and the heat of sin. *David*, when he bewails his murder, goes to that as the root of it, *Psl. li. 5*. All a man's actual sins, be they ever so gross, might soon be healed, if that were but healed. This is the fountain of blood: this is the law of sin; here is the devil's magazine.

(5.) *Though thou art free from these foul sins, yet thou mayest have some secret idol or other, set up in thy heart.* Now the least sin, a vain thought, is a mortal sickness in itself; and if it be not healed, will prove a soul destroying sickness. The Papists have devised a distinction, of sins venial, and sins mortal. *Bellarmino* teaches, that there are some sins, that in their own nature, do not make a man liable to eternal death, but only to temporal chastisement. The Scripture knows no such distinction, nor can we allow it. All sins are venial to true repentance, except the sin against the Holy Ghost: he that commits that, shall never be forgiven. But there is no sin venial in its own nature; the least is a mortal sickness, and deserves eternal death. So saith the Scripture, *Gal. iii. 10. Rom. vi. ult.* The Apostle speaks of all sin, that is opposed to legal righteousness; and there is no sin so small, but it is a breach of the law of God. *For of every idle word that a man shall speak, he shall give an account at the day of judgment, Mat. xii. 36.* What is less than an idle word? and yet that doth in it's own nature deserve wrath. By all these things, it appears, that a man may be spiritually sick, and yet no thief or drunkard, &c.

IV. *Yet may a person gather evidences of grace, from his acting against sin, in some cases.* *David* argues so, *Psl. xviii. 23*. And, therefore, for the winding up of this point, I shall lay down some rules, whereby a person may know whether his acting against sin, be from a principle of saving grace, or merely from common restraint.

(1.) *He that forbears sin, from a principle of true grace, doth act from the authority and declaration of a naked truth.* When the immediate declaration of God's will in his word,

without any investiture of promising or threatening, carries a man out against sin, then he is abstaining from sin, from a principle of true grace. Not but that he who hath true grace, may look both at the word of promise, and the word of threatening: God hath propounded both promises and threatenings, as helps to preserve his people from sinning; but the principal ground of acting against sin, is the revelation of God's will, forbidding such actions. This is that which *David* saith of himself, Psl. cxix. 161. *My heart standeth in awe of thy word.* He was kept from sin upon the mere awful respect, that his heart bore to the naked word of God. So Psl. cxix. 11. *Thy word have I hid within my heart, that I might not sin against thee;* so *Joseph*, Gen. xxxix. 9. When the heart and the word of God, are shut up alone; when Heaven and Hell, promises and threatenings are laid aside, and the heart and God's command are alone; if thou be restrained from sinful actions, upon the account of God's command, then is thy forbearing of sin, from a principle of grace, Psl. xvii. 4. *By the word of thy lips, Balaam* shews himself an hypocrite, in this very thing; he pretends to abstain from sin, upon the authority of God's word, Numb. xxii. 18.; yet afterwards, in that very act, goes away from God, out of a covetous principle.

(2.) *He that forbears sinful actions, from a principal of grace, acts against sin, out of love to holiness.* He abstains from sin, not only as it is a deadly thing, but as it is a loathsome thing, Psl. cxix. 140. *The word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it;* *David* abstained from sin, because of his love to the purity of God's law, out of his love to righteousness. This is that in Jer. xxxii. 40. *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* When we are kept from sin, because of the fear of God, then it's a right abstinence, Neh. v. 15. Isa. xxx. 22. When sin is cast away, and abstained from, because it hath filthiness in it, and pollutes them that meddle with it, such forbearance of sin argues grace. Psl. cxix. 113.

(3.) *He that abstains from sin, upon the principles of grace, will abstain from all sin.* From profitable and pleasurable, as well as disparaging, disgracing sins; from small, as well as great sins; from sinful anger, as well as murder; from sinful words, as sinful actions: he will abstain from walking and standing, as well as from sitting with

the ungodly, Psl. i. 1. : he will pray with *David*, Psl. cxxxix. ult. : *See if there be any wicked way*, Psl. cxix. 104. : *I hate every false way*. This is clear, from what goes before ; he abstains from sin, out of respect to God's law, and out of love to holiness ; therefore, he cannot but desire to forbear all, because every sin is unholy, every sin is derogatory to God's law.

(4.) *He that forbears sin, from a principle of grace, will act as well against the being of sin in his nature, as the breaking out of sin in his life.* He will labour to suppress the corruption of his heart, as the excursion of his feet, Psl. li. 5. *In iniquity was I shapen*, &c. : he would be delivered from a polluted heart, as well as from a polluted hand. So it was with *Paul*, Rom. vii. 23, 24. He that acts against sin, from common restraint, will never much care for the inhabitation of sin ; but, he that hath grace, is most careful and sorrowful for that ; he would keep down the filthiness of the spirit, as well as the flesh, 2 Cor. vii. 1. The sinful habit is worse to a gracious man, than the sinful actions.

(5.) *He that forbears sin, from a principle of grace, is as careful of doing good, as abstaining from evil.* He prays, as *David* did, Psl. cxix. 5. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.* He that hath only restraining grace, matters not much the neglecting of good ; but he that hath true grace, is very careful of this, as well as for the other ; he chuseth the way of obedience, as well as refuseth the way of disobedience. A godly man is described by this character, that *he chuseth the things that please God*, Isa. lvi. 4. He is every jot as careful for the positives as for the negatives of religion. When these things concur, then the forbearance of sin, will witness your condition to be good ; otherwise, it will be no evidence.

II. The second false rule is—*Outward profession.* There are many who do conclude, that they are in a good condition for their souls, merely because they are members of the Church, especially if they hear, pray, &c. This is the general rule, whereby carnal professors judge their condition to be good. They have been baptized, they have come to God's table, they have lived in the Church, &c. : therefore surely, they are in a very healthful condition. I have four things to say, for this particular.

(1.) *'Tis a great honour to be a member of the Church,*

though it be only by visible profession. *Theodosius* accounted it a greater honour to be a member of the Church, than head of the empire. It was that which advanced the people of *Israel*, above all other people, Rom. iii. 1, 2. The Church of God is the most honourable society upon earth : such as are the members of the Church, are nearer to God than any others : they enjoy such privileges, as none else enjoy ; they have more helps to salvation, than any others. We can never be sufficiently thankful, for this favour.

(2.) *To pray, to hear, and to frequent the public ordinances, &c. is that which all ought to do, who hope to be saved.* That man is in a bad state, that slights these duties. The wrath of the Lord lies upon them, *that do not call upon the name of the Lord*, Jer. x. 25. He that wilfully neglects these, can never be saved, Psl. xiv. 4. *Not to call upon God*, is the character of a worker of iniquity.

(3.) *Yet all this may be done, and a person be in a very sick state.*

(1.) *There are many instances in Scripture to prove this.* Was not *Ishmael* circumcised, and a member of the Church ? Gen. xvii. 26. ; yet, without any saving interest in the promise. Was not *Esau* *Jacob's* brother ; likewise, a member of the Church ; yet, lived and died a profane wretch ? Heb. xii. 16. Did not *Cain* sacrifice as well as *Abel* ? Gen. iv. *init.* and yet the Apostle saith, he was of that wicked one, 1 Joh. iii. 12. What think you of *Saul*, *Ahab*, and all those wicked men ? Did not they live in the Church, and observe outwardly the worship of God ? yet, were the sons of *Belial*. In the New Testament, did not the Pharisees fast and pray ? Luk. xviii. 12. Was not *Judas* a disciple ? Did not he preach as well as others ; and yet, a child of perdition ? Was not *Simon Magus* baptized ? Acts viii. 13. Did not *Ananias* and *Sapphira* walk with the Church of God, a long time, Acts v. 1. ? and yet they lived and died wickedly, v. 5, 6, 10. Had not the five foolish Virgins lamps, as well as the wise ? Mat. xxv. 1, 2, 3. ; and yet, they were excluded out of Heaven, v. 11, 13. ; so were the three sorts of ground hearers, Mat. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

(2.) *God takes men off in Scripture, from, resting upon this :* and that, both in the Old Testament and the New. In the Old Testament, Jer. vii. 4. ; in the New Testament, Mat. iii. 9. Now for a man, to make that an argument of a good

condition, which God saith, is no argument, is to no purpose.

(3.) *Our Saviour tells, that many will plead this in vain, at the day of judgment, Luk. xiii. 26, 27.*

(4.) *A man cannot be a hypocrite, till he do all these things.* A hypocrite may pray, fast, and hear as often, and as well externally, as a sincere Christian, Isa. lviii. 3. ; and more plainly, Isa. lxviii, 1, 2. Therefore, the bare performance of these duties, doth not argue, a man to be in a good condition.

IV. And lastly, *Yet may a person, from the performance of these duties, evidence himself to be in a good condition Godward, when he doth perform them according to those rules which the word of God lays down.* I shall reduce them to three heads.

I. *When holy dispositions, are brought with us to duties.* Several dispositions the word of God requires, in every duty.

(1.) *Holy fear and reverence of God.* Of this David speaks, Psl. v. 7. *In thy fear will I worship, towards thy holy Temple.* 'Tis meet the heart should be possessed with an holy reverential awe of God, when it comes before him in any duty, Heb. xii. 28. The distance that is between God and man ; the consideration of that pollution, that is upon the souls of the best, should breed this reverence : we cannot sanctify God, if this fear be not in our hearts, Isa. viii. 12. Now, that man who can find such a disposition in his heart, when he comes to hear, or to pray, may conclude, that there is a principle of grace in his heart. Though bare hearing and praying, will not argue our state to be good ; yet trembling at the hearing of the word, and a filial awe of God upon the heart in prayer, does evince a spiritual principle.

(2.) *Humility of spirit.* God expects, that those that come to worship him, should come very humbly, with low, mean, vile apprehensions of themselves : so came the Publican, Luk. xviii. 13. There are many things that testify his low conceit of himself : *He stood afar off : he would not so much as lift up his eyes to Heaven : he smote his breast, &c.* Thus it was with Abraham, Gen. xviii. 27. : and with Ezra, ix. 6. Now, though bare prayer will be no argument, of a good condition, yet praying in

godly humility will; if it be from the heart, if it be from a deep spiritual sense of our own vileness. If our souls lie in the dust, before the Lord, when we come to worship him; such worship argues grace,

(3.) *Faith in the promise.* 'Tis the mind of God, that we should bring faith with us to God, in every duty. *He that cometh to God, must believe,* Heb. xi. 6. Now, when in hearing, we can close with God, by applying what we hear; when in prayer we are able, in some measure, to cast ourselves upon God, to rely and depend on him, for audience, for acceptance: when we can pray, as *David* saith to God, and look up for an answer, Psl. v. 3. Such dispositions in duties, are arguments of a work of grace upon the heart.

(4.) *Hungerings after God.* God looks, that we should have strong desires after the duties of his worship. *David* fainted and longed for the *Courts of God*, Psl. lxxiii. *init.* Psl. lxxxiv. 2. Psl. xlii. 1.; when we not only pray, but hunger after prayer; when we are glad of an opportunity of hearing, as *David* was, Psl. cxxii. 2.; especially if these hungerings be to private, as well as public duties, such prayers are evidences of grace.

II. *When a man hath right ends in duties.* God looks much at the ends which men propose to themselves, in all their actions; and so do holy men. I shall first, negatively remove those carnal ends, which hypocrites and carnal professors propound, in the duties of religion.

I. *The pleasing of men.* Most propound, no higher, no other end of their holy services but this: the Apostle disowns this end, Gal. i. 10.

II. *Custom.* When a man prays, and hears, because it hath been his wont so to do. Many men have no other end, but merely a religious wont: they and their fore-fathers have been used to do so; therefore, they continue it.

III. *To avoid penalty of the laws.* This many men make their end, in religious duties.

IV. *To get honour, preferment, repute with men.* When men pray, hear, &c. merely because they would be accounted religious. The *Shechemites* were circumcised, Gen. xxxiv. 23.

V. *To stop the voice of conscience.* Many men sometimes pray, hear, read the Scripture, &c. that they may stop the

mouth of conscience, accusing them for some sin committed. This is nothing else but spiritual bribery.

VI. *When duties are made a mask, to cover some foul sin, either done or intended to be done.* As *Jezabel's* fasting, 1 Kings xxi. 9.; the Pharisees long prayers, Mat. xxiii. 14. He that makes these, or any such things as these, the end of his duties, cannot conclude a principle of grace, from the performance of them, although they be ever so frequently done : but the right ends are such as these.

(1.) *Obedience to the Divine command.* When a person shall, upon serious examination, find that his end in praying, hearing, &c. is, that he may shew his subjection to the Divine precept. He prays, not only because he wants mercy, but because he would honour God, by performing his commands. When a person can say, with *David*, Psl. cxix. 4, 5. *Thou hast commanded, &c.* ; he may, from the performance of such services, comfortably conclude, that there is a principle of grace in his heart. When we can appeal to God, that we wait upon his ordinances, because we would do that duty which we owe to God ; in such case, we may argue from duties to grace.

(2.) *A desire to get and keep communion with God.* This is one end, for which holy duties are appointed ; that by them, God and the soul may come together. And this hath been the end, which holy men have propounded to themselves, in holy duties, Psl. xxvii. 4. *Thy face, Lord, will I seek.* Thus it was with *David*, Psl. xlii. 2. *When shall I come and appear before God?* and Psl. lxxiii. 2. *To see thy power, and thy glory, so as I have seen in the sanctuary.* Now, when a person can, in the uprightness of soul say, that his end in coming to duties, public and private is, because *he would see him whom his soul loveth* ; and therefore, is not satisfied with a duty, if he meet not with God in it ; he may then comfortably conclude, from the performing of duties, a principle of grace in his heart.

(3.) *A desire to get corruption weakened; and grace strengthened.* This is one end, why God has instituted his ordinances, that sin may be outed thereby, and grace confirmed, 2 Cor. x. 4. ; and 1 Pet. ii. 2. Now, when a person can, in the integrity of his soul say, that he prays, hears, &c. ; that he may get love increased, faith confirmed, grace exercised ; that he may get his heart warmed, his conscience purified ;

then he may comfortably conclude, from such duties, that his heart is upright with God.

III. *When the deportment is fair, after duties.* I shall here name two things.

(1.) *When we bless God, for duties.* 'Tis a great mercy to enjoy the ordinances of God, Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. Now, when you return from prayer, hearing, &c. if you can, from your souls, bless the Lord, that you have had such an opportunity, from a sincere heart; then you may conclude, that your hearts have a principle in them, above nature, when you look upon them as privileges.

(2.) *When the doing of duties, make you fruitful.* When you hear, and give up yourselves to be ruled by the word you hear, Rom. vi. 17.: when you desire, as well *to be doers of the word, as hearers of it*, Jam. i. 22, 23, 24.: when you pray, and desire to live according to the prayers you make to God: when your souls are troubled, that you cannot find that fruitful efficacy of your duties, upon your hearts, and in your lives, which you would fain find, and can heartily chide yourself, that you are no better, for your duties. When you go to prayer, or to hearing, or to the table of the Lord, and your earnest prayer to God is, that he would make you better, by every duty: when you go into your closet, to read the word, or send up some ejaculation to Heaven, that the word may be effectual on your souls, &c.; then you may comfortably conclude, that there is a supernatural work upon your hearts. But if these things be not in you, in some degree and measure, the bare performance of duties, though they be done ever so frequently, or so exactly, as to the outwards of them, will be no ground, for the reasons above-mentioned, that you are in a good condition. This is the second false rule.

III. The third false rule--*Outward prosperity.* Multitudes of men, judge of their spiritual condition, by the rule of outward prosperity. They think their souls are in health, because their bodies are; they think they are inwardly prosperous, because they are outwardly happy. They have great revenues, a full trading, a multitude of children, increasing flocks and herds, and are advanced to great honours; therefore, they bless themselves, and say, God loves them, and they are highly in his favour. They think, they are the heirs of Heaven, because they are the possessors of the earth.

Thus it was with the ten tribes: when the Prophets threatened the judgments of God against them, for their sins; they ran to this sanctuary to secure themselves, and concluded God's special favor from outward prosperity. Hos. xii. 8. 'Tis the general, and common refuge of worldly men: they think their hearts are full of health, because their purses are full of gold; because the world dandles them upon her lap, they think God dandles them upon his knee. For the removal of this, I shall propound four things.

1. *'Tis a mercy in itself, to enjoy a competency of these outward things.* To have health, wealth, prosperity, plenty, are mercies to be received with much thankfulness from God. To be poor, sickly, weak, is in itself an evil; and to be rich, strong, healthful, is in it's own nature a blessing: which I shall prove. by these two arguments.

(1.) *The Scripture puts outward prosperity amongst blessings.* Deut. xxviii. 3, to 15.; so Lev. xxvi. 3, 4, &c. Now, what the Scripture calls a blessing, is so in it's own nature. The judgment of God, is according to truth.

(2.) *Those that are rich, &c. have more opportunities of doing good, than the poor.* They may, by their outward estates, promote religion, help to advance the worship of God in the world, and be instruments of planting the Gospel in foreign parts. A good purse, and a gracious heart, meeting together, may be very instrumental, sundry ways, for the glory of God, and the good of men. They may be the means of bringing in many to God, both by their example, which is very prevalent in the world, and by giving unto men, rewards for godliness sake. One rich man in a parish, may be a great help to make a parish religious, if not in heart, yet in profession; which is a great mercy. Rich men have a capacity of doing that good, which men of meaner condition want: they may relieve prisoners, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and ransom captives; which other men cannot do. Now, it's a mercy to be put into a capacity of doing good: it's a grief to a good man, when he is not capable of doing the good he would, though it be but a temporal good: 'tis a greater trouble to a good man not to be able to give, than it is to the poor to be turned away without receiving; though, in such case, the liberality of the heart is accepted, instead of the liberality of the hand. He that would give, when he hath not to give, is set down in God's calendar, for

a bountiful man, though he give nothing at all. This is the first conclusion.

II. *Riches and grace do sometimes go together.* Outward and inward prosperity, sometimes meet in the same person. 'Tis not impossible, that rich men should be good men: we have some instances of this in Scripture. *Abraham* was very holy; called *the righteous man*, Isa. xli. 2.; *the Father of the Faithful*; *the Friend of God*, &c.: and yet, *Abraham* was very rich, Gen. xxiv. 35. *Job* was exceedingly pious; a man, whom God boasts of to Satan, Job. i. 8.: and yet he was very rich: he had plenty of children (those are first put in the inventory) and he was rich in all other wealth, v. 3. he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she asses, and a very great household, and chap. the last when his estate is surveyed again, you will find it doubled, v. 12. Many other instances, we have in Scripture, of the association of grace and greatness. This God doth for these six reasons.

(1.) *To confute the judgment of the world.* Plain dealing is a jewel, saith the world; but he that useth it, will die a beggar. God gives these things to his people, to cross that wicked proverb.

(2.) *To convince men that they are evil things.* It was *Austin's* observation long since. God bestows outward things upon the worst of men, that they may not be thought to be the only good things; and he bestows them, sometimes, upon his own people, that they may not be thought to be evil things.

(3.) *To shew his dominion and right as disposing even of these outward things.* Did not some godly men enjoy these outward things, they would be apt to think that God did not meddle with things of this nature, but now the conferring of these things upon the godly, disproves that Atheism.

(4.) *To let men see, even sensual men, that it is not in vain to serve God.* Worldly men say---*What profit shall we have if we pray to him?* Job xxi. 15. Now, they are not capable of understanding the inward part of holiness, but they can understand the outward advantages. God therefore will prove the profit of piety, by arguments, as they are able to understand.

(5.) *To fulfil the letter of his promise.* He hath promised these outward things to godly men, Psl. cxii. 2, 3. Now, men would question his faithfulness, in keeping promise, if it should not sometimes be made good in kind.

(6.) *God makes some of his people rich, to help such as are poor.* Wicked men generally hate the people of God, for their very holiness. They are not willing to relieve them, though God, by his power, makes them authors of good to them. Therefore, that the poor of God's flock, may have some to stand by them, for conscience sake, God is pleased to make some of their number great, that the wicked of the world may not always tread them down, without opposition. *Joseph* was made great, to provide for his Fathers house, in their poverty, Gen. 1. 20. God makes some of his flock rich and great. that the poor of his flock may have some to look after them for his sake. This is the second conclusion.

III. *That grace and holiness is the best and nearest way to attain to all outward prosperity.* For although God, as sovereign Lord, make rich and poor, whom he please; yet no man can expect or hope from temporal felicity, but the man that is truly godly, 1 Tim. iv. 8. *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come:* and Matt. v. 5. The froward do often enjoy much of these outward things, but the promise of the inheritance of them belongs only to the meek; Prov. iii. 16. Riches and honour are put into the hand of wisdom, and none but wisdom's children can upon any good ground, expect to inherit either of them. This is the third.

IV. *That the enjoyment of these outward things, is no infallible evidence of a good condition.* 'Tis possible for a man to possess a great portion of outward happiness, and yet be unhappy in his soul. The purse may be full of gold, and yet the heart empty of saving grace. The body may be fat and in good liking, and yet the soul lean and withered. A man may have great possessions in the world, and yet have no interest in God. Our Saviour supposeth this, Matt. xvi. 26. There are four things required to make up this supposition

(1.) A man that gains the whole world, must enjoy all the riches, honour, pleasure of worldly things.

(2.) He must have a heart capable to take delight in all these.

(3.) He must enjoy all these from the first to the last ; from the beginning to the end of life.

(4.) Freedom from all vexations and troubles of spirit. This no man ever did enjoy : and yet, our Saviour supposeth, that a man may enjoy all this, and yet lose his soul. That outward prosperity, cannot evidence a man to be in a state of grace, appears by these seven arguments.

(1.) *They are bestowed upon the worst of men.* The Scripture tells us of many rich men, that lived and died wickedly. What think you of him mentioned, Luk. xii. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. : he was exceedingly rich ; his treasury was too little ; his store-house was too small for his revenues, and yet no interest in God at all, that might entitle him to salvation ; a very fool for all his riches. You read of another in Luk. xvi. 19. These are all expressions of prosperity, and yet, v. 23. that very person is in hell torments. You know the story of *Nabal*, 1 Sam. xxv. 2, 6. He was very wealthy, and yet a sinful fool : as his name is, so is he ; *Nabal* is his name, and folly is with him. You read of some, in Job. chap. xxi. 7, 8, 9, 10. that enjoyed much prosperity, and yet desperately wicked ; read v. 14. *They say unto God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Sodom and Gomorrah* were very rich, it was a land fruitful as the garden of God, Gen. xiii. 10. ; and yet, they that possessed that fruitful land, are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, Jud. vii. The Scripture is full of such examples.

(2.) *Riches and honour are but common blessings.* They are the good things of the *foot-stool*, not of the *throne* ; they are in the left hand of wisdom, Prov. iii. 16. Now, no common mercy can argue special love, Eccl. ix. 1. *No man knows either love or hatred, by any thing that is before him.*

(3.) *Outward prosperity is very often a hindrance of salvation.* That of our Saviour should seriously be taken notice of. *'Tis easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God*, Mat. xix. 24. Riches too often draw the heart from God, they cool zeal and quench devotion. We see by experience, many men that were hot for religion, when they were poor, are grown dead, now they have got estates. Our Saviour tells us, that the deceitfulness of riches choaks the word, and makes the heart unfruitful, Mat. xiii. 22. Now, that which hin-

ders men from salvation, can be no argument of a state of salvation.

(4.) *Men may transmit riches to their posterity.* And that which a man may have, by descent and natural generation, can be no evidence of a state of grace. No man is born in a state of grace, Eph. ii. 2. *A man must be born again, before he can see the Kingdom of Heaven,* Joh. iii. 3. Many men are born rich and honourable, &c.; therefore, none of these things can entitle a man to Heaven.

(5.) *If outward prosperity were an argument of grace, then covetousness would be no sin.* 'Tis no sin but a duty, for a man to labour for, and to covet evidences of grace. We are commanded to do so in Scripture; *Make your calling and election sure,* 2 Pet. i. 10. But covetousness is not a duty, but a sin, a sin of a high nature. *The root of all evil;* so the Apostle calls it, 1 Tim. vi. 10. 'Tis idolatry, one of the worst kinds of idolatry.

(6.) *Outward prosperity may be quite lost.* Therefore, it can be no evidence of a state of grace. Evidences of true grace can never totally be lost, where once they are; the knowledge of the evidence may be lost, but the ground of the evidence cannot be lost; but all outward prosperity may be lost. *Riches are not for ever,* Prov. xxvii. 24.. Honours die before him that has them; *Haman* was an example of that, and our own age hath given us fresh precedents in abundance, of the perishableness of these things. Do not many that were clothed in scarlet, embrace the dung-hill? Are not rich men made poor, and poor rich?

(7.) *Outward prosperity is sometimes given in wrath.* He gave them a King in his anger, and took him away in his wrath, Hos. xiii. 11. God gave quails to the Israelites, but his wrath came along with them, Ps. lxxviii. 30, 31. 'Tis true of all outward things. *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them,* Prov. i. 32. Prosperity kills more than adversity: but now, that which is an evidence of salvation is never given in wrath. I shall answer one question, and then I shall shut up this rule, viz.

Quest. How shall I know whether outward things are given in mercy?

Ans. 1. *When they make the heart more spiritual.* Riches when they are given in anger, make the heart sensual and

stubborn; when they are given in love, they spiritualize and enlarge the heart God-ward; we may see it in *Hannah*, 1 Sam. ii. 2. *My heart is enlarged*. Outward mercies naturally make the heart carnal, but when they are given in mercy, they make it spiritual, see it in *David*, Psl. xxiii. 5, 6. *I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*. When health, riches, &c. raise the heart nearer Heaven, then 'tis a sign they are bestowed in mercy.

II. *When they make their heart more humble*. Naturally outward prosperity swells the heart; that caution, 1 Tim. vi. 17., notes the distemper. A full purse ordinarily makes a big heart: if therefore, you find your spirits humble under your outward enjoyments, you may conclude they are given you in mercy, see it in *Jacob*, how humble was he, Gen. xxxii. 10. his spirit was as low, when he marched with his two bands, as when he travelled with his scrip and staff from his fathers house; so it was with *David*, 2 Sam. vii. 12. 13. There is a promise of great prosperity to *David*, and to his house; see how humble this made *David's* spirit, v. 18, 19. *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto*.

III. *When we are as ready to lay them out for God, as to receive them from God*. When God gives thee an estate, and thou growest covetous, art loath to part with it, to promote either the service of God or the good of his people. When God gives thee a healthful body, and thou carest not to serve him with thy health, &c. this is a sign that these things are given in anger; but when thou canst freely part with thy substance, when thou studieth, how thou mayest honor God with thy estate, as the wise man enjoins, Prov. iii. 9. When thou art willing to feed God's hungry, clothe his naked, and lodge his houseless ones, &c. This is an argument that God gives thee thy estate in mercy; but now, if thou squanderest it away in the service of thy lusts, or if thou canst not find in thy heart to lay it out for God; thou mayest suspect that God gave thee what thou hast in great anger. Thus much for the third false rule.

IV. The fourth false rule—*The judgment of others*. There are very many in the world, who conclude themselves to be in a good condition, because others have a good opinion of them; they think they are perfectly well, because others tell

them they are well; especially if they be such as are godly and religious. The Apostle hints at this, Gal. vi. 4. I shall lay down two things.

I. *'Tis a very great mercy to be well reputed of, by such as are godly.* The good opinion of one godly man, is better than the acclamations of many wicked. It's an honor to any man, to have a good report amongst them that fear the Lord in sincerity. Its recorded concerning *Timothy*, that he was well reported of by the brethren that were at *Lystra*, and *Iconium*, Acts xvi. 2. (*emartureito.*) They that are godly are more knowing than others, as having the spirit of God, and so better able to discern of men than others are; and then they are more faithful than others; they dare not willingly call evil good, or good evil. The testimony of one godly man, is to be preferred, and valued before the testimony of many wicked. It is a strong comfort to a godly man, when such as are of a discerning spirit approve of his condition.

II. *Its possible for a man to be in a very sick estate, and yet be well reputed of by the most godly, wise, and faithful men.* I shall give three arguments to clear out this, viz.

(1.) *We have several instances of it in Scripture.* What think you of *Judas*? he was a very wretched man, our Saviour calls him a *Devil*, Joh. vi. 70., and yet all the eleven had a very good opinion of him. If *Judas* had desired it, he might have had a testimony, under the hands of all the Disciples, that they judged him to be a very godly man. When our Saviour told them, that one of them should betray him; every one was more ready to suspect himself than *Judas*, Mat. xxvi. 21, 22. *They were exceeding sorrowful, and began to say unto him one by one, Master is it I?* *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were (without doubt) well reputed of by the people of God, and yet you know, Acts v. 1, 2. what great hypocrites they were; they both agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord. Was not *Demas*, once highly approved of by the Apostle *Paul*? and yet a very painted rotten hearted hypocrite, one that forsook the Apostle, to embrace the present world, 2 Tim. iv. 10. Why should I tell you of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, and many others, who were highly esteemed by the servants of God, in that generation? for our present age will furnish us with too many precedents of this nature; many, very many who have turn-

ed fearful apostates, of whom the servants of God judged far better, than ever they durst of their own hearts.

(2.) *No man doth infallibly know the state of another mans heart.* 'Tis made by some a question, whether a man can know the state of his own heart infallibly? though I do not question that, yet I believe.

I. That no man can do it at all times.

II. That no man can do it, without the extraordinary assistance of the spirit of God, bearing witness with his spirit, Rom. viii. 16. Sure it is, no man can infallibly know the state of his brothers heart. All the knowledge we have of other men is but conjectural. *A faithful brother, as I suppose, saith the Apostle concerning Sylvanus, 1 Pet. v. 12.* 'Tis God's prerogative infallibly to know the hearts of men. You cannot infallibly know a man's temporal estate, unless it be discovered, much less his spiritual estate.

(3.) *That, which will be a good ground to another man, to judge well of us, will not be a sufficient ground, for us to judge well of ourselves.* Others are bound to judge well of us, if they see no evil in us. *Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things, thinketh no evil, 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 6, 7.* A fair outward deportment free from offence, is a sufficient ground for another man to judge charitably of me, and for me to judge charitably of another. But now, more than this is required to give me a ground of judging well of myself. I must see some inward saving work of grace in my heart, before I can judge, or before I ought to judge my own condition to be good. That which will evince me to be a censurer of another, if I do not judge well of him, will prove me a flatterer if I do judge well of myself, upon such grounds; because I must know positively my condition to be good, before I conclude it to be good. Thus much for this rule.

V. The fifth false rule—*Some outward reformation.* Many men conclude themselves to be in a very healthful condition, because they are better than they were; they have left some sins, which formerly they walked in, &c. therefore, they hope their condition is good in the sight of God; they were wont to swear at every word, but now they swear not at all, or if they do, 'tis but very seldom, &c. I have four things to say about this rule.

I. *'Tis a very great mercy when men are on the mending hand.* When they grow better any manner of way, in any degree, they have cause to bless God exceedingly; when he that was a common swearer, can now speak without an oath; when he that was a cheater, doth now deal honestly with men; when he that was a drunkard, doth now live soberly. There is some better hopes of this man, than there is of another, who goes on still in his old ways. When a man can say, I was an extortioner, an oppressor, a liar, &c.; but now I have left these sins: he hath very great cause to bless God that made him better. To leave one sin is a greater mercy, than to gain the whole world.

II. *No man can have hopes of Heaven, that doth not mend his life.* He that doth not outwardly reform, shall not go to Heaven. Job. xxii. 23. Col. iii. 4, 5.

III. *It's possible that a man may outwardly reform some things, and yet be in a very sick condition still.* A man may be better than he was, and yet far short of a good condition. A man may be less wicked than he was, and yet not at all truly good in the sight of God. Consider four things to clear this.

I. *A man may part with some one sin to make more sea-room for some other sin.* Though all lusts are from the Devil, and lead to the Devil, and all are contrary to holiness, yet there is some opposition between one lust and another, so that one cannot act vigorously, unless another which opposeth it, be brought under. Prodigality is contrary to covetousness, &c. Now it's possible for a man to leave some sin, out of love to another sin; to part with covetousness out of love to prodigality. A man must put out some of his children, to make room for the first-born, and yet he accounts them all his children. A man's heart may be so much addicted to one sin, that he may seem to neglect all the rest, to make the better provision for that which is most dearly beloved.

II. *A man may leave some sins, because he hath not ability or opportunity to commit them as before.* The prodigal man hath so far wasted his estate, that he hath not ability to be so wastful as before. The adulterer hath so impaired his health and strength, that he is not able to act his sin, as he did before. A thief may have reformed his thievery, because

he hath not that opportunity to purloin as he had before ; he is better watched than he was.

III. *A man may part with some sins merely to please men with whom he keeps company ;* not because he hates the sin, but because he shall displease others, whom he would not displease. A man may forbear some dish of meat which he loves, because his friend whom he hath invited, doth not affect it.

IV. *A man may part with some sin, because he hath found some outward smart by it.* He hath impaired his health by immoderate drinking, and therefore he will now be sober ; He loves the sin as well as ever, but he cannot, without the hazarding of his life, or health, frequent it. Many a man abstains from some meats, not because he hates the meat, but because the meat doth not agree with him. So it is in respect of sin. It hath been a chargeable sin to him, and will be so still if he use it, therefore he puts it away. By all these things, it appears, that some outward reformation may be attained unto, and yet the soul still in a sick condition. This is the third thing.

IV. *How may a man know then, whether his reformation be such, as will evince his condition to be good.* These things will evidence this.

I. *If it proceed from a true displacency and hatred of it.* When loathing of sin goes along with leaving of sin ; when the heart is disaffected with it. When the filthiness of sin is apprehended, as well as its destructiveness, Isa. xxx. 22. True grace doth hate sin more for its filthiness, than for its damnableness ; more because of its opposition to God, than for it's hurtfulness to man. He that can find this, may conclude his reformation to be an argument of grace.

II. *If care be taken as well to suppress the root, as to reform the outward act.* Every sinful act doth proceed from a sinful habit. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, fornications, &c.* Mat. xv. 9. Now if you can find that the outward, and the inward reformation go together, you may conclude the presence of grace, from such acts of reformation. This is that, of which the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. vii. 1. For if as great care be used, to be freed from the filthiness of the spirit, as of the flesh, 'tis a sign the fear of God is there. *Put away your iniquities from before mine*

eyes, saith the Lord, Isa. i. 16. What is it to put away our iniquities, from before the eyes of God, but to take care that they may be blotted out of the heart, as well as put away from the hand.

III. *If the reformation be general.* If we mend in one thing as well as another, we may conclude grace is in the heart. Hypocrites always reform with a reservation; they leave a nest-egg for Satan to sit on. *In this thing, the Lord be merciful to thy servant*, saith Naaman, 2. Kings v. 18. But were there is true grace, the reformation is universal. Abuses against the first table are reformed, as well as against the second table; and abuses against the second table, as well as against the first. *Through thy Commandments*, saith David, *I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way.*

IV. *When it is a reformation to all good, as well as from evil.* When the heart is carried out as strongly after the reforming of good things omitted, as of evil things committed, then 'tis a sign that there is grace in the heart. When a man shall not only reform of oppression and injustice, but reform to liberality and open-heartedness; God puts these together as equal and essential branches of all true reformation, Isa. i. 17. *Cease to do evil, learn to do well.* When a man shall not only leave swearing, but conscientiously take up the work of praying, &c.; such reformation will evidence grace to be in the soul.

V. *When it is a settled and fixed reformation.* Two things are comprehended in this.

(1.) Resolution never to return to those evils, which we have put away, never to forsake those holy courses, which we have taken up: when a man through the grace of God, doth purpose that his reformation shall last as long as life lasts; he may fall into the same acts again, but 'tis against his intention, against his prayer, against his endeavour.

(2.) A resolution to carry on his reformation from day to day in regard of degrees, never to leave mending and mending, till he have mended every thing that is amiss either, in excess or defect. This I call fixed reformation.

VI. The sixth false rule—*Quietness of conscience.* Many persons judge themselves to be in a whole condition, because they find no troubles in their spirit; they have not those

Tormina and gripings in their consciences which other sinners have had, therefore they gather, that they are in a good condition; they think they are well, because they do not find those pains, which others have found. I have these three things to say about this rule.

I. *Holiness is the only way to true quietness of conscience.* See Jam. iii. 17. Isa. xxxii. 17. Disturbance is threatened to the wicked, Job. xv. 21, 24. Job. xx. 20. Isa. lvii. 21.

II. *All quietness of conscience is not an argument of a good condition.* This I shall make out by three arguments, *viz.*

(1.) *A man may be in a very good condition, and yet want peace of conscience.* A good conscience, and an unquiet conscience, sometimes meet in one man. Though purity of conscience, be the way to peaceableness of conscience; yet the conscience may be pure, and for the present unpeaceable; we have many instances of this in Scripture; that of *Heman* is very remarkable, Psl. lxxxviii. 15, 16.; a very good man, as will appear by many instances in that *Psalm*, yet had a very stormy conscience. That instance in Isa. l. 10. is another proof of this: yea, Jesus Christ himself had always a good conscience, but he sometimes wanted a peaceable conscience; when he uttered those words, Mat. xxvii. 46. he wanted serenity and peace. *David* a holy man doth often complain of unquietness, and of great troubles in his conscience. In the beginning of the new birth, when the pangs are not well over; upon the hiding of God's face, upon the stepping aside into sin, upon want of evidence of grace, upon some great assault of Satan; in such cases consciences that are very good, may be very unquiet.

(2.) *A man may be in a very bad condition, and yet find some quietness in his conscience.* See that clear Text to prove this, Luk. xi. 21. While the strong man armed keeps the Palace, all is in peace. The Devil may be in full possession of the soul, and yet the soul may be sensible of no unquietness at all. The rich man in the Gospel, sings a *Requiem* to his soul, Luk. xii. 19. The Apostle speaks of some that are past feeling, Eph. iv. 19. (*apelgekotes*) They sin, and yet do not feel sin.

(3.) *Some quietness of conscience is a disease.* Some peace of conscience, ariseth from ignorance of a man's condition. 'Tis not peace, but security, sleepiness, deadness, yea, 'tis

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one of the greatest judgments God inflicts in this life, to afford men quietness of conscience in a sinful condition. When God lets a man be as *Jonah* was, ready to be drowned, and yet fast a-sleep in the sides of the ship.

III. *All that are truly godly, shall at last find peacefulness of conscience.* Though they may be full of tossing, and inquietness in their consciences, yet they shall finally find peace, though not perhaps, so much peace as shall free them from doubting, yet as much as will free them from distrust. Peace is promised to them often in Scripture, Isa. xxvi. 3. *Thou shalt keep him in peace*, Psl. lxxxv. 8. Psl. xxxvii. 37. Christ hath purchased peace for them. The spirit is a spirit of peace, as well as of grace. Joy is the fruit of the spirit, as well as love, &c. *True peace of conscience is an evidence of true grace.*

Quest. How shall a man know true peace of conscience from carnal security? they may be distinguished three ways.

I. *From the rise of them.* True peace proceeds from true spiritual roots, viz.

(1.) *Acquaintance with God*, Job xxii. 21. False peace ariseth rather from ignorance and forgetfulness of God; but true peace ariseth from acquaintance and communion with him.

(2.) *The knowledge of our justification.* Of this the Apostle speaks, Rom. v. 1. When a person doth upon good grounds, know that his person is put into a state of justification, and thereupon finds peace and quietness in his spirit; this is a right born peace.

III. *The sense of our walking according to the rule of the word.* The Apostle mentions this, Gal. vi. 16. He that can derive his peace from such foundations, may conclude the work of grace, from the work of peace, as truly as he may conclude light from the Sun.

H. *From the manner of the working of his peace.* True sound peace, hath usually followed great conflicts of conscience. True quietness, ordinarily grows out of disquietness. Storms usually go before calms; as it was with that natural outward calm, Mar. iv. 39.; so it is generally with spiritual calms: though spiritual storms are not of the same violence, or of the same continuance in all, yet some tempestuous blasts go before these serenities.

III. *From the properties of it.* I shall name these three properties of true peace.

I. *It will allow no peace with sin.* Carnal security is at amity with sin, at least with some sin; but gracious peace is at enmity with all sin. The Prophet mentions this fruit of it, Psl. lxxxv. 8.

II. *It raises the heart to enjoy more full communion with God.* The heart is made more active in all holiness; whereas carnal security deadens the heart; it's a heart-ruling peace, Col. iii. 15. A heart-keeping peace, Phil. iv. 7.

III. *True peace continues even in outward trouble.* Outward troubles dash carnal security, not true peace, unless God hide his face in trouble, Joh. xvi. 33. This is the sixth rule.

VII. The seventh false rule—*Comparing a man's self with others.* Very many do build much upon this foundation; they judge themselves to be in a healthful estate, because they are not so sick as other men; they see abundance worse than they are, and therefore, they conclude all is well with themselves. This was the Pharisees case, *God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are*, Luk. xviii. 11.; this is a general common case. I have two things to say about this head.

I. *'Tis a great mercy that thou dost in any degree or measure exceed any of the Son's of men.* As we are bound to bless God that others go beyond us, so 'tis our duty heartily to bless God, that he hath made us in any degree better than the vilest of men; and we have great reason to do so in four respects.

(1.) *Because our nature is as bad as the nature of the worst man.* Original corruption, as it doth abide in all, so it is equal in all. No man is better than another by nature. The image of the old *Adam* is by nature as deep, as black, and as broad in every one of our souls, as it was in the soul of *Judas, Cain, Saul*, or any of those that are at this day in the place of torment, Psl. xiv. 3. *They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy.* The Apostle citing this in Rom. iii. 9, 10, &c.; refers it to the natural estate of all the Son's of *Adam*, both Jews and Gentiles; and therefore it is that he pronounceth the Elect, and regenerate, as well as others, to be *by nature the children of wrath*, Eph. xii. 3.

This being true, it appears to be a mercy, that we are in any thing, better than the vilest of men. Though we be not so good as many, yet 'tis some happiness that we be not as vile as some.

(2.) *Inasmuch as a person is less evil than others, his punishment will be less than the punishment of others.* There are certainly degrees of torment in Hell. Though in regard of duration, there is no difference (the torment of every damned creature, is an eternal torment;) yet in regard of degree and quantity, there is lesser and greater. Those that question whether there be degrees of glory in Heaven, do hold without question, that there are degrees of punishment in Hell. The justice of God distributes punishment for sin, as the wages of it, and therefore according to the quantity of sin, shall be the measure of punishment. And the Scripture is express to this purpose, Mat. xi. 22, 24. *Tyre and Sidon shall not undergo so much torment as Chorazin and Bethsaida. Sodom and Gomorrah shall be inferior in punishment to Capernaum. Capernaum out-sinned Sodom and Gomorrah, and therefore shall exceed them in degrees of punishment.* Now 'tis a mercy to have any abatement of torments. Though a man be shut out of Heaven; yet if he have a milder punishment in Hell than others, it is a great mercy.

(3.) *He that is less evil than others, dishonors God the less.* The great evil of sin consists in this, that it casts dishonor and contempt upon God. Sin is worse as it provokes God, than as it damns man. Every act of sin greatly dishonors God, and the more acts of sin a man commits, the more doth he dishonor him. Now 'tis a great mercy that we do not dishonor God so much as others. Though it be a great unhappiness that we do not glorify God, as much as some, yet it is some happiness, that we do not dishonor him as much as others. To be preserved from dishonoring God by any sinful action, is in itself a greater mercy, than to enjoy the greatest outward advantage in the world; the dishonoring God, (though it be but by one act, the least that is imaginable) is a greater misery, than to lose all the world, because the name of God is better than all the world; so to be delivered from dishonoring God, though but in one act, is a far greater happiness

than to acquire the best outward advantage, which the world hath to bestow.

(4.) *He that is less evil than others, is delivered from some filthiness.* Sin is a great defiler; 'tis the only soul-defiler in the world: the Scripture resembles it to the most filthy things; to the vomit of a dog, to a miry puddle: you have both these in one place, 2 Pet. ii. 22. 'Tis often called filthiness in the abstract, Lam. iii. 9. Now 'tis a mercy, though a man be not clean, that he is not altogether so filthy as he might be. To be preserved from any one spot of this filthiness, is a very great kindness, a kindness to be acknowledged with the greatest thankfulness. This is the first conclusion.

II. *It's possible for a man to be better than others, and yet in a very bad condition.* A man may be sick unto death and yet not so far spent in his body, as some others are. A man may have a greater estate than many hundreds, and yet be no very rich man for all that. So 'tis in spirituals. Thou mayest peradventure be nearer Heaven than many hundreds are, and yet be in the high-way to Hell, and destruction. The young man in the Gospel that came to Christ, had out-stript thousands of his Neighbours. When Christ told him, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy Father and thy Mother; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:* What answer did he make? *All these things have I keep from my youth up,* Mat. xix. 20. There were millions in the world at that time, that were inferior to him, and yet he was under the power of mortal diseases. The greatest part of the world, are in a very bad estate. Our Saviour tells us, that *many are called, but few are chosen,* Mat. xxii. 14. The greatest part of men in the world, walk in the Broad-way. *Judas, Saul, Jehu,* were better in many respects, then multitudes that then lived in the world, and yet every one of them sick unto death. God hath no where in Scripture said, that that man is in a good condition, that is better than others, unless those others whom he excels be in a saving regenerate condition.

VIII. The eight false rule—*Knowledge of spiritual things.* Many men think themselves in a saving condition, because they have attained to a good measure of knowledge in the things of God; they understand the doctrine of the Bible,

they are well versed in the principles of religion, they can answer almost any question in divinity, and therefore, they judge their estate to be very good. I have three things to say concerning this head, viz.

I. *'Tis a very great mercy to have the knowledge of saving and spiritual things.* 'Tis a happiness to have a deep knowledge in natural things. Human knowledge, (if the face of it could be seen,) is far brighter than the morning star. Knowledge never had, never will have, any enemy but ignorance. What saith Solomon? Eccl. ii. 13.; that *wisdom excels folly as far as light excels darkness.* But especially the knowledge of Divine things. This is a rare jewel indeed. Knowledge is one of the excellencies of God, *He is a God of knowledge,* 1 Sam. ii. 3. Knowledge was one of the perfections of man in the state of innocency. A knowing man finds more content in knowledge, even in the knowledge of natural things, than ever he could find in gold, or silver, or any such things. You have heard of some, that have cast away their outward estate, that they might not be taken off from searching after knowledge. But of all knowledge, the knowledge of Heavenly things is most excellent. *The price of this knowledge is better than wisdom, and the merchandize of it, than fine gold,* Prov. iii. 14, 15. No outward gain in the world, is comparable to the gain of this knowledge. By knowledge, we come to know what is to be done, what is not to be done; what is to be believed, what is to be rejected: hereby we are enabled to guide others, to regulate our own actions. By knowledge, the most principal and highest faculty of the soul, the 'understanding,' comes to be enriched. Knowledge makes a man's face to shine. Many high commendations are given in Scripture to this precious pearl of knowledge. To know spiritual things, is a greater mercy by far, than to be made ruler over the whole world, and to want knowledge. He that wants knowledge is brutish, he is under the curse of *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. iv. 16. *Let a beast's heart be given him.* An ignorant man is more truly a beast than a man.

II. *It's the duty of all that expect to be saved, to labor after this Knowledge.* God commands it often in Scripture, Prov. iv. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Get Wisdom, Get Understanding.* Search the Scriptures, Joh. v. 39. *Let the Word of Christ dwell richly in you, in all Wisdom,* Col. iii. 16. An ignorant heart is a

bad heart; I mean a heart totally ignorant of the things of God, for without knowledge the mind is not good. Knowledge is as necessary unto practice as light is to action. A man must know the will of God before he can do it. Ignorance is the mother of popish devotion. But knowledge is the mother of true devotion. A Christian can do nothing acceptably without knowledge, want of knowledge is a destructive thing especially if it be where God affords the means of knowledge Isa. xxvii. 11. Hos. iv. 6. Want of knowledge doth stir up controversies between God and men, Hos. iv. 1. A man may go to Hell for want of knowledge, as well as for want of Faith or other graces. God puts such a high esteem upon knowledge that he saith, *It is life eternal to know him, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent*, Joh. xvii. 3. It's the character of the worst of wicked men, *that they desire not the knowledge of God's ways*, Job xxi. 14. Knowledge in it's kind and degree is necessary to salvation as well as holiness. Why is piety in Scripture so often set out by the name of Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding? but to let us see how necessary it is to the attainment of true Piety.

III. *It's possible to be very knowing in spiritual things and yet to be in a sick condition.* A Physician may know the nature of all diseases, and yet be sick of the worst of them. A person may be well versed in the History of the Scriptures, in the system of Divinity and yet for all that be in a bad condition as to his eternal estate. This I shall make good by these four arguments.

I. *From the Apostles supposition*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2. The Apostle supposeth a great measure of knowledge. Very few men attain to that height of knowledge which is there supposed. See the expressions. *To speak with the tongue of men and Angels.* To have the gift of prophecy, which God bestowed upon many in the primitive times, to understand all mysteries and all knowledge, yet it's possible that all this may be without one spark of true grace. Though a man could say the Bible *memoriter*, could resolve all the difficult cases in Divinity, yet it's possible that such a man may be destitute of all saving grace.

II. *From experience.* There are at present, and have been in former ages many knowing and learned men, who had not the least measure of true holiness. *Judas* was (without doubt) a man of great knowledge. We do not find any thing

in Scripture, that he was inferior to any of the Apostles in notional knowledge. He could (for ought we find the contrary) preach as well as any of them, and yet was a very wicked man. What need we instance men when the very Devils are such great intelligent creatures; their name carries knowledge in it, (*daimon quasi dæmon gnarus, peritus.*) The Devil understands Scripture as to the letter of it, far more exactly than the best of men. Now that which the worst of men, and the worst of Devils, may attain unto, can be no infallible argument of a good estate. We see by experience, many drunkards, swearers, and debauched men, in all manner of literal knowledge, excel those that desire to fear God in uprightness. The Pharisees were very knowing, Rom. ii. 18, 19, 20.

III. *Natural abilities and education may help men to notional knowledge.* All this kind of knowledge is attained by industry, and education, by the concurrence of God's ordinary blessing; whereas grace and holiness are not by education, or industry, or from natural abilities, but from special grace of God. Knowledge is but a common gift, which is bestowed promiscuously upon the good and bad. Now no common gift can entitle a man to Heaven.

IV. *The Scripture doth not make knowledge simply, but saving sanctified knowledge an evidence of salvation.* Notional knowledge may be without sanctifying knowledge. Sanctified knowledge will evidence a man's condition to be good, but notional knowledge will not.

How shall a man know whether that knowledge he hath, be a sanctified saving knowledge, or merely a notional knowledge? I shall lay down these evidences of it, and shut up this point.

I. *Sanctified and saving knowledge is an humbling knowledge.* Mere literal knowledge swells and puffs up the heart, 1 Cor. viii. 1.; makes men conceited and proud, and despise others; but holy knowledge makes the heart low and self-denying. See it in *Asaph*, Psl. lxxiii. 22., he was one of the wise men of his time, and yet how vilely doth he speak of himself? *So foolish was I, and so ignorant, I was as a beast before thee.* *Agur* was a very intelligent good man, and yet how humble is he, Prov. xxx. 2, 3. The reason of this humbling property of knowledge is, because it helps men to see their own vileness; as their knowledge increaseth, so the

knowledge and sense of their own unworthiness increaseth.

II. *Saving sanctified knowledge doth not abide in the head only, but in the heart.* Notional knowledge lies only in the head and in the brain; it hath no influence upon the heart to purify and purge it; only it swims in the brain. But saving knowledge doth distil, and descend upon the heart; it hath it's chief residence in the inward man; it purifieth and cleanseth the soul, makes it more holy than ever it was. The Apostle makes purification one effect of true wisdom, Jam iii. 17. The wisdom that is from above, is first pure. Notional knowledge is often a heart-corrupting knowledge, but saving knowledge is ever a heart-purifying knowledge.

III. *Saving knowledge is a life-reforming knowledge.* Notional knowledge is often a life-disordering knowledge; it makes men loose, or licentious; we have too much experience of this; but saving knowledge regulates the conversation. He that knows spiritual things savingly, desires as well to practice as to know. His knowledge doth not please him, unless his practice be conformable to his knowledge. Very excellent is that prayer of *David*, Psl. xxv. 4, 5. *Saving knowledge would not only see God's ways, but would be led in them.* It's ever practical. You have such another prayer of *David*, Psl. cxliii. 10. *Teach me to do thy will, lead me into the land of uprightness.* He that can find these properties, may from his knowledge, whether it be much or little, argue grace; otherwise mere knowledge, though it be ever so exact, will not infallibly argue a good condition.

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

(1.) *How necessary it is for the ministers of the Gospel to be frequent in the doctrine of conviction.* They are, under Jesus Christ, spiritual physicians, whose office it is, ministerially to cure the spiritual maladies of the soul. One effectual means to do this, is to endeavour to set sin upon the conscience. To discover men's spiritual estate unto their consciences, that they may be delivered from those gross mistakes about their condition under which they are held. 'Tis a very hard thing to persuade men that they are sick. Men are naturally apt to run away with a conceit that all is well with them; therefore 'tis needful to bring sin to sight. The cure is as good as done when this is done

Conviction of sin is the first work of the Spirit of God, Joh. xvi. 8. He is a convincing, before he is a comforting spirit. You must give the ministers of Christ leave to set sin upon the conscience. The fallow ground must be broken up before the seed of comfort is cast in. A sin-convincing ministry is most likely to be a soul converting ministry. They cannot discover to men their righteousness, Job xxxiii. 23. until they have convinced them of their unrighteousness.

(2.) *Do not wonder that spiritual physic is so generally contemned.* 'Tis at first sight a very great wonder that the offers of grace and salvation should be so despised; that the word of salvation should do so little good in the world. Christ is tendered, life is held out in the preaching of the Gospel from day to day. Wisdom crieth without, and lifts up her voice in the concourse of the city, and yet men do not come in. Ministers may complain as the Prophet, Isa. xlix. 4. What is the reason? 'Tis because men run away with an opinion that they are well, that their condition is good; and therefore are the precious tenders of salvation so generally slighted.

(3.) *See the reason why there is so little complaining of sin.* Never more sin, never less spiritual complaining of sin. 'Tis a great rarity to hear any soul crying out, *What shall I do to be saved?* You may hear in every corner complaints of bodily diseases; one of his gout, a second of his head, a third of the stone; but very few crying out of sin. How comes this about? It is because men think they have no sin, they see not their diseases. They think they are sound men, and therefore they are quiet, and make no complaints either to God or men.

(4.) *'Tis a marvellous great mercy to have a true discovery of our spiritual diseases.* 'Tis not a happiness to be spiritually diseased; no, no; sin is a misery; but 'tis a mercy that those that are diseased, are convinced of their condition. Many men think they are well, when they are indeed going down to the chambers of death; if, therefore, God have so far opened your eyes as to let you see your disease, you have cause to bless his name. Such conviction, though it be not the cure of sin, yet it is the ready way to the cure. It may be, your sorrow after conviction is greater than it was before: you are now full of fears and horrors,

which before you were free from; but certainly your condition is far safer. Bless God for the work of conviction, and he will bring it on to the work of conversion.

Doct. IV. *Jesus Christ is not a physician to any that think themselves spiritually whole.* It was the misery of the Pharisees, that they dreamed themselves to be in a very healthful estate. They looked upon all others as men mortally sick, and upon themselves as sound men: our Saviour therefore declines them as patients, unfit for him to meddle with, and applies himself to the poor Publicans and sinners, who did see, and acknowledge themselves sick of sin, and ready to perish. Jesus Christ doth not immediately heal sinners, as they are sinners; but his constant general method is, first to take off that conceit, that is naturally in their hearts, that they are in a good estate; and when he hath shewed them their sickness, then he goes in hand with the cure. The making of the heart sensible of sin, is the work of Christ, as well as the healing of sin. Did not Christ give the sinner a sight of his misery, he would never be able to see his misery. Conviction of sin, is as truly the work of Christ, as conversion from sin, Joh. xvi. 8. Nature is as unable to discover sin, as it is to heal sin when it is discovered. All that is meant in the doctrine is this, that Jesus Christ doth not ordinarily heal any souls, till he have first delivered them from the misconceit of their condition, and given them eyes to see, that it is otherwise with them, than they did before imagine. This is the full scope of this doctrine, and of this Text, as is clear from v. 13, where our Saviour doth in plain and express terms set down, what is here more covertly propounded, saying *I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

In the handling of this doctrine, I shall open these four things:—

- I. Shew that this is Christ's usual method.
- II. How this work of discovery is wrought.
- III. Why Christ takes this course in the healing of sinners.
- IV. Whether this work be wrought alike in all.
 - I. That this is Christ's usual method, appears two ways.
 1. *By our Saviour's own declaration.* We shall find him in Scripture expressing this two ways.

(1.) *By declaring the end of his coming.* He came from Heaven, to save and convert such kind of persons, Luk. xix. 10. *The Son of man came to seek, and to save that which was lost.* Not simply all such as are lost (for there are abundance of lost sinners, which he neither came to seek or to save intentionally) but such as see themselves to be in a lost condition, such as are first made sensible of that lost undone condition they are in without Christ. So Isa. lxi. 1, 2., he doth there fully declare, both for what sinners he came into the world, and how he heals those sinners; they are such sinners as are broken hearted; such sinners as mourn; they are meek sinners. Christ first breaks their hearts, causes them to mourn from a sense of their sins; meekens their spirits by a work of conviction, and then heals them by the application of the promises of grace.

(2.) *By the form of invitation he uses to sinners.* This is fully express'd by the Evangelist, Mat. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* The words are very significant, (*kopiontes pephotismenoi*) Christ doth not call sinners as sinners, but as laboring sinners, as burdened sinners, such as are even overwhelmed, and borne down with the heavy weight of sin. Such as see sin, and upon the sight of it, are so overwhelmed, that they cannot look up, but are ready to sink and die under it.

1. *From the order of this working upon such as he hath healed.* You can hardly find any one that ever was healed but in this way; but multitudes that have been wrought upon after this manner. Those three thousand who were converted by *Peter's* ministry, were first brought to the sight of their sick estate, and then were converted, Acts ii. 37. What is the meaning else of those words, *katenugesan te kardia*; (pricked in the heart) there were not the least part or point of the heart, but it was wounded; it was with them as if the sharp points of daggers, or stings of scorpions had been stuck and fastened in their hearts. So it was with the jailor, Acts xvi. 27, 29, 30.; all those expressions and gestures of his shew, that he was first convinced of his sick estate before he was cured. The same method is observable in *Paul's* conversion, Acts ix. 4, 5, 6, 9., his falling to the earth, his trembling and astonishment, the words uttered by him, the continuance of his blindness for the space of three days. What are these, but evidences of the work of conviction

which Christ wrought upon his heart. The same course and method in some degree or other, doth Christ observe in all those whom he heals of their spiritual diseases, especially if they be such as are *adulti*, grown men, when this work is wrought upon them. This is the first particular.

Quest. II. How Christ makes this discovery?

Ans. *This is wrought ordinarily by the preaching of the law.* The ministry of the law is the most certain and expeditious way to make the sinner sensible of his sick estate. The law hath a three-fold effect upon the soul, as to the accomplishing of this work, *viz.*

I. *The law sets before the eye of the sinner the miserable estate which man is in by sin, with the wrath of God due to him for the same.* All knowledge of sin is by the law through the convincing power of the spirit of God, Rom. iii. 20. By this means the Apostle came to see his sin, Rom. vii. 7, 9. He thought inward concupiscence to be no sin, till God by his law, had better informed his judgment. He thought his condition while he was a Pharisee, as good as the condition of the best; but when God had tutored him a-while by the law, then he looked upon himself as a dead man; when the commandment came, *sin revived* (saith he) *and I died*, v. 9.

II. *It doth convince the conscience of the sinner, that he is the guilty person whom the law threateneth with all that misery.* The law of God doth point him out, as *Nathan* did *David*, and tells him that he is the man against whom all that wrath is denounced. The Apostle mentions this work of the law, 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. The sinner being smitten with the edge of the law, falls down on his face, confessing that he is the very man that is guilty of such sin, and liable to the miseries due to such sin. The condition discovered is his condition.

III. *The law awakens the sinner out of his security, lets him see the impossibility of his personally satisfying the law, and so works horror and astonishment in the soul.* This effect it had on the jailor, Acts xvi. 29., his heart was set on a trembling frame, upon the apprehension of that sad guilt and misery under which he lay, and from which he was not able to deliver himself. This is that which the Apostle calls, *the spirit of bondage*, Rom. viii. 15. which is opposed to *the spirit of adoption*; This is the second thing.

Quest. III. Why Christ takes this course in the healing of sin? why will not he heal the sinner, till he has him sensible that he is not in a sound condition?

Ans. *That sin may be embittered.* Sin is in itself an evil and bitter thing; 'tis compared unto gall and worm-wood, and 'tis far more bitter than either of these. Now 'tis the mind of God, that the sinner should taste the bitterness of sin before he be healed, Jer. ii. 19. therefore he is pleased to take this course.

II. *That the sinner may be brought to a holy shame for his sin.* Sin is a very shameful thing; 'tis called shame in Scripture, and 'tis the mind of Christ, that all sinners that are recovered shall bear the shame of their sins, Ezek. 16. 52. Now if the sinner should be healed before his sin be discovered, this design of God would be frustrated.

III. *That the sinner may be willing to come up to his terms.* When Christ begins at first to deal with a soul about the work of conversion, he makes a great hesitation, and uses all craft with Jesus Christ to bring him to low terms. Christ therefore shews him his naked condition, what he is, and what he must expect, if he close not with him; and by this means he is brought to a ready and willing compliance with him. We see it in those three thousand who were converted under *Peter*, when their condition was discovered, when anguish and horror was upon their spirits; then they were contented to do any thing, Acts ii. 37. *What shall we do to be saved?* Thus also it was with *Saul*, Acts ix. 6. When Christ had created those tremblings and astonishments in his spirit, then he comes off fully to Christ, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* So it was with the Jailor; when he had a true representation of his estate, then he cries out, Acts xvi. 30, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* A man that is in extremity will do any thing to save his life. When he sees that he must perish if he does not presently consent to what is proposed, then he lingers not: if he must throw all his goods overboard, he is contented to cast them out presently, because death is before him.

IV. *That the mercy of the cure may be more highly valued.* Salvation from Hell is a very great work, which should be valued by all on whom it is bestowed. The Prophet *David* calls upon his soul, and all that is within

him, to praise God for such a mercy, Psl. ciii. from beginning. He that considers the work of salvation, the unworthiness of the persons enjoying it; the costliness of it, and the multitudes that shall never partake of it; must needs acknowledge it a thing worthy to be esteemed. But so unthankful a piece is the heart of man, that he doth not value it at any considerable rate. Jesus Christ, therefore, before he brings any into such a state, will discover their misery to themselves, that so he may provoke them to extraordinary thankfulness for it. And the truth is, nothing doth so much enhance the price of salvation in our hearts, as a clear manifestation of our wretched condition. See how the Apostle's heart is enlarged upon this very consideration, 1 Tim. i. 15. Had he not seen himself to be the chief of sinners, he would never have thought salvation by Christ worthy of all acceptance, as now he did.

V. *That the skill of the physician may be more clearly discovered.* Jesus Christ thinks to advance his own glory in all the works he does for the sons of men: as in other works, so especially in this great work of conversion. Therefore it is, that he will not heal any till he has shewed them their sad estate; that they may see his wisdom, power, and goodness, in healing them. Men that think little or nothing ails them, do not half so much value the physician's pains, or skill, as those that see themselves at the very brink of the grave, when the physician takes them in hand. Jesus Christ therefore will shew them every sore, that so they may publish his glory that wrought it for them. *I was brought low, and he helped me*, saith David Psl. cxvi. 6. See how the poor blind man proclaims the honour of Christ, Joh. ix. 32.

Quest. (4.) Whether Jesus Christ observes the same method in this work of discovering the sinner's estate to himself? Whether all sinners have the same measure of humbling and terror, and whether they continue for the same time under apprehensions of wrath?

Ans. *Jesus Christ is a free agent. He is not tied to any certain method, nor doth he always walk in the same way.* His dispensations, in the work of convincing men of sin, are various and different. The work is wrought on all so far as to make the soul sensible of sin's bitterness above all other bitterness, and to make it sensible of Christ's excel-

lency above all other excellent things. But that it is done in the same violent manner in all, or that it is of the same continuance, cannot be affirmed. Conviction and conversion may be wrought at the same sermon, as we see it was with those three thousand, Acts ii. 37. 41. They were no sooner pricked in their hearts, but they gladly received the word. There was great difference between this work in *Lydia* and in the Jailor, Acts xvi. 14. God shewed her sickness in a milder way. The Lord opened her heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of *Paul*. But the Jailor had an earthquake, and great horrors in his conscience, v. 27. 29.

(1.) *Some sinners have been more scandalous than others.* These are brought to Christ with greater troubles; so it was with the Jailor; he had been a cruel and bloody man; God laws him under deep sorrow.

(2.) *God hath a greater work to do by some sinners than others.* These he uses to deal with in a more rough way, that he may prepare them for the better service. This seems to be the reason of his sharp dealing with *Saul*, Acts ix. 15, 16.

(3.) *Some sinners are of a more rough and turbulent nature than others.* These must be handled more severely. Some men must be bound before they will be ruled. So it is with some kind of sinners. Thus with *Manasseh*, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.

(4.) *Some have been sinners of a longer standing than others.* These Christ useth to be more sharp with in his way of curing.

(5.) *Some sinners have been more confident in their civil righteousness than others.* As *Paul* was in his Pharisaism, Phil. iii. These Christ uses to handle more sharply. Jesus Christ is a wise physician, he observes the nature of all his patients, and accordingly prescribes medicines for them. He that hath the least measure of this conviction, hath so much, as that he sees himself lost, undone, helpless, hopeless in himself. He sees the evil of sin, and Christ an excellent, suitable, all-sufficient good for his soul. This one thing I add more. Where there is the least sorrow before conversion, there is many times greater sorrow, and more troubles of spirit after conversion.

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *How sad is the condition of those that never yet were truly made sensible of their sick estate.* They never yet had a true, lively, sensible apprehension of their sick condition. They were never so much as pricked in their hearts for sin, so as to make them loath it. They were never taken from all their high conceits of their own natural estate, &c. These men have cause to suspect that sin is not yet cured. A person may have some conviction of his misery, and not be healed; but a man cannot be healed without some conviction. The heart cannot be broken for sin, without the sight of sin, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. There can be no self-loathing till there be a remembering of our ways and doings that have not been good.

(II.) *How necessary the preaching of the law is to true conversion.* A man will never be taken off from the opinion of his own healthfulness, but by the preaching of the law. The law shews men what they are, what they may expect, &c. The fallow ground of the heart will never be broken up, without the plough of the law, Jer. iv. 3. The plough of the law must go, and make deep furrows too, before the seed of comfort be cast in. Though the preaching of the law does not convert, yet it helps forward conversion, inasmuch as it works that preparatory work, without which conversion ordinarily is not; as the needle makes way for the thread, so the law makes way for conversion. The spirit of bondage makes way for the spirit of adoption, and that is wrought by the preaching of the law.

(III.) *The mistake of those who are against all kind of preparations to conversion.* They would have mercy held out to sinners as sinners, not as sinners so and so qualified. Surely the Scripture hath laid down qualifications for sinners to whom the Gospel is tendered. They must be humbled sinners, burdened sinners, &c. The mercy of the Gospel is not to be prostituted to sinners as sinners, but to broken-hearted sinners, to heart-wounded sinners, to sinners that see themselves lost in themselves, to hungering and thirsting sinners. The brazen serpent was only for such to look upon as were stung with serpents. Such as are in some measure sensible of the stinging nature of sin, are to be invited to lay hold on Christ. As it is an undoing to wounded sinners, to keep them from Christ; so 'tis an

undoing to such sinners as are not in some measure pressed with sin to apply the promises of the Gospel. This was prefigured in the Leper: *The Leper must cry unclean, &c.* Every sinner is this Leper: the sight of sin must go before healing of sin.

(IV.) *Let ministers take the same way which Christ takes for the curing of sinners.* Jesus Christ is both an able and faithful physician. 'Tis no disparagement to use his method, yea, 'tis the greatest wisdom to prescribe the same receipts which Jesus Christ prescribes; he uses to take men off from the opinion they have of their own way. His manner is to let men see they are sick, to convince them of sin, before he applies healing medicines. All those ministers that desire to have their endeavours successful, must do so likewise. People must be contented to suffer their condition to be known, to suffer themselves to be made sick, that so they may be cured. This is Christ's way; this is a safe way, this must be our way. Though such kind of preaching put you to some present trouble, yet it will be to your eternal advantage. Your sores cannot be healed comfortably, till you see them to be sores, and festered sores. You must be contented to suffer the ploughings of the law, that you may be prepared for the comforts of the Gospel. You must be contented to be cast down, that you may be prepared for raising up. You must be contented to be led to the gates of Hell, that you may be brought to the kingdom of Heaven. Better a great deal to go to Heaven through Hell, than to sail through an imaginary Heaven, and land at the dark stairs of Hell in the end.

Doct. 5. *Those that find themselves to be spiritually sick, shall find Jesus Christ a physician ready to heal them.* No physician was ever so ready to heal a sick brother, as Jesus Christ will be to cure a sin-sick sinner. We find in the Gospel that Christ was very willing to heal those that came to him sick of bodily infirmities. We do not, that I remember, read of any one that was sent away uncured, that earnestly begged his help either for themselves or any of theirs. The leprous, the paralytic, the demoniac, the lame, the blind, those that were sick of fevers, those that had bloody issues. Whatever sicknesses men had, they obtained favour, Mat. iv. 23. Christ ever valued the soul above the body, therefore he will be much more ready to

neal the sicknesses thereof. He healed many of the sick publicans, when they saw their diseases; as *Zaccheus*, *Matthew*, &c. And he will be, to the end of the world, ready to afford the same mercy to any that are, or shall be, in their condition.

Three things are here to be unfolded by way of explanation.

I. What it is to be spiritually sick of sin.

II. That Christ will be ready to heal such.

III. What are the reasons of this readiness.

(1.) To be sick of sin comprehends these six particulars.

First, *A true sight of our sinful condition.* That man who never yet had the sight of his sinful estate, was never yet truly sick of sin; the soul must be convinced, that it is in a sinful estate. Thus it was with the publican. *Luk. xviii. 13.* He acknowledged himself to be a sinner, (*amartalon.*) Nor is all sight of sin sufficient: but that sight of sin which is an ingredient of spiritual sickness, must have these two properties.

I. *It must arise from the word of God.* This was the foundation of the Apostle's sight of sin, *Rom. vii. 9.* *When the commandment came, saith he, sin revived, and I died.* Thus also it was with those three thousand, *Acts ii. 37.* *When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts.* The sense of sin did arise from something which was delivered to them out of the word of God. No other light besides this divine light will discover sin so as to make the soul sick of it.

II. *It must extend to sin in the root, as well as to sin in the branches.* I mean original birth-sin, as well as actual sin. Possibly the sight of sin may arise first from some actual transgression. So it was with those converts, *Acts ii. 37.* That bloody act of theirs against Jesus Christ, was the first sin they saw. Actual sins are more obvious to the eye than original sin. This is a sin lying under ground, more remote, at a greater distance from the cognizance of a sinner; therefore peradventure some actual offence first is set upon the conscience; but sooner or later doth this actual sin bring to the sinner's conscience the sight of that sin, which is the root both of this and of all other actual sins; namely, *that body of death, that law of the members*

as the Apostle calls it, Rom. vii. 23. *Which continually wars against the law of the mind.*

Secondly, *A serious apprehension of the misery and danger the soul is in by reason of sin discovered.* No man is sick of sin till he see the danger which sin hath, and which it is likely further to plunge him into. Thus it was with those converts, Acts ii. 37. The question they propound, *What shall we do to be saved?* doth imply clearly enough, that they looked upon themselves, as men in a state of damnation in their present condition. And indeed the same word of God which discovers sin, doth discover wrath also as the wages of sin; so that the sick sinner is one that lies under the apprehension of wrath, which he expects suddenly to fall upon him.

Thirdly, *Compunction and contrition is wrought in the soul by reason of sin.* The heart throbs and aches, by reason of that miserable state which by sin he is brought into. Thus it was with those converts, Acts ii. 37. They were pricked in their hearts, their spirits were full of grief and vexation, to remember what they had done, and what they were like to suffer. Thus it was with the publican, Luk. xviii. 13. *He smote his breast,* saith the text; his heart was overwhelmed with grief, shame, fear, sorrow. There was a mixture of all these passions in him at once. Thus it is with all those that are spiritually sick. This is that which our Saviour calls labouring, and being heavy laden, Mat. xi. 28. *Sickness, when 'tis seen, is evermore accompanied with pain and anguish.*

Fourthly, *Dissatisfaction with the present condition.* This follows upon the former; and you will find it hath ever been in such as have seen their spiritual sickness. What is the meaning of those questions which were propounded by the three thousand, Acts ii. 37. By the Jailor, Acts xvi. 30. And by *Paul*, Acts ix. 6. Do they not clearly evince that they were unsatisfied with their present estate? It was no pleasing thing to them to continue any longer in that condition. As if they should have said, 'tis no abiding in this estate. 'Tis such a kind of reasoning as the four lepers had among themselves, when the famine was so raging in *Samaria*, 2 Kings vii. 3. *Why sit we here until we die?* Whatever the success or event be, we must think of some other course. Just so it is with a conscience-wounded

sinner; he cannot be contented with that estate. Though he know not how to get out, yet he cannot be content to abide there.

Fifthly, *Despair of deliverance by any thing in himself.* He that is sick of sin, looks upon himself as utterly unable to help himself. This is that which is called, in another place, spiritual poverty. And, saith Calvin, *Nemo spiritu pauper, nisi qui in nihilum apud se redactus.* Thus it was with those sick sinners before named. Their asking so seriously what they must do, did clearly imply that they themselves knew not what to do; Something they thought must be done, and yet they knew not what it was. No man is truly sick, but he that doth clearly see that, in regard of himself, he is both helpless and hopeless. Self-insufficiency is one ingredient of spiritual sickness. Self-denial and soul-sickness are evermore companions. This is clear from the publican's confession and prayer, Luk. xviii. 13. He goes out of himself to God, acknowledging that if ever he was healed, he must be healed by mercy.

Sixthly, *A willingness to take any course God would have him, so he may be healed.* This is implied in that question so often mentioned, Acts ii. 37, Acts ix. 6. Acts xvi. 30. They are very ready to follow the advice of God, given by his ministers, for a speedy cure. Cut them, lance them, scar them, bleed them, purge them, any thing to free them from sin, any thing to save them from wrath, which is ready to devour them. They will stick at nothing, let God take his own way, and use his own medicines; whatever he prescribes, they are resolved to drink it down, be it ever so bitter, be it ever so unsavoury, be it ever so contrary to their corrupt constitution. They hope he can heal them, they are willing he should use his own method for the healing of them. This is the first thing wherein spiritual sickness consists.

(2.) That Christ is ready to heal such sinners as these, appears three ways.

I. *He inviteth such to come to him for cure.* The invitations of Christ are not empty compliments, as the invitations of men often are, but real things. He is not in jest, but in good earnest, when he bids men repair to him. Never did one friend lend to another with so much heartiness, as Christ doth to men. Now we shall find him inviting

sinners under this qualification. That's a famous place in Mat. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* And again, Isa. lv. 1. *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, &c.* Who is he that thirsteth, who is he that hath no money, but such sinners as I have described? These are the patients whom Christ invites.

II. *He hath promised to take care for the curing of such.* The promises of Jesus Christ are not false, ambiguous, or fallacious, as the promises of men too frequently are. He is the faithful witness, the *Amen*, Rev. iii. 14. All his words are spoken in simplicity and verity. Now 'tis his promise to cure heart-wounded sinners. That in Mat. xi. 28. hath an express promise annexed to the invitation. The promise of refreshing or giving rest, is as good as if he had said, *I will heal you.* To this agrees that in Mat. v. 3, 4, 6. Poverty of spirit, mournfulness of spirit, hungering and thirsting, do all go into the description of the sickness of the soul; and to each of these doth Christ make express and full promises of spiritual healing. Christ's promise is the best security Heaven or earth can afford.

III. *God the Father hath promised it in Christ's behalf.* You will many times find that the Prophets which have prophesied of him before his incarnation, have by God's appointment, and in God's name, engaged themselves that he should heal such sinners. That is a very full place amongst others, Isa. xlii. 3. that it's meant of Christ, is clear from Mat. xii. 10. where this text is applied to Christ, and it's applied to him upon this account, that *he healed the man with a withered hand*, v. 10, 13. and multitudes of other diseased persons, v. 15.; whereupon this of the Prophet is brought in, *Behold my servant, &c. A bruised reed shall he not break, &c.* The words are a *Meiosis*, more is understood than is expressed. *He shall not bruise*, the meaning is, he shall strengthen it, *he shall not quench*, the meaning is, he shall cause it to flame, and nourish it. By the *bruised reed*, and the *smoking flax*, we are to understand such sinners as are bruised, and bowed down under the sense of their great wretchedness; these sinners Christ will be ready to cherish. You have it set out by another metaphor, c. xl. 11. *He shall carry the Lambs, and gently lead them that are with young.* Who are the lambs, and such as are with young, but broken

spirited Christians that are overwhelmed and pressed down with the apprehension of their own misery? Christ will be so far from neglecting these, that he will put them in his bosom, a place of warmth, tenderness and security.

III. Why Christ is so ready to help poor sinners.

I. *He doth it in obedience to his commission.* God the Father, when he sent him into the world, gave him a very special charge concerning these persons. He was on purpose anointed to the place and office of a physician, that he might take care of such as these. You may read his commission set down at large, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. There you have the patients described, and the physic applied, and the authority enjoining and enabling. The patients are described by such terms, as set out the sense of their condition. The meek, the broken-hearted, the captives, the bound ones, the mourners of Zion, those sitting in ashes, they that are under the spirit of heaviness. The cure is set down in expressions suitable to the nature of these sicknesses. To the meek, good tidings, to the broken-hearted, binding up, to the captives, liberty, to them that are bound, the opening of the prison, to them that mourn, comfort, the oil of joy; to them in ashes, beauty, to the spirit of heaviness, the garment of praise. The authority enjoining, this is the divine unction of the Father by the spirit. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, the Lord hath anointed me*, so Isa. l. 4. Jesus Christ is a very exact observer of his Fathers commandment. He hath his commission not only in his hand, but even in his heart, Psl. xl. 8. in the midst of his bowels. Now because God hath in so peculiar a manner recommended these to his care, therefore doth he apply himself to them for their cure.

II. *From the instigation of his own mercifulness.* Jesus Christ is very tender-hearted, he is full of the bowels of compassion. The Apostle calls him *a merciful and faithful High Priest*, Heb. ii. 17. He could not be a complete High Priest, if he wanted either of these. Now being so merciful and compassionate, he will not turn away his bowels from them that are in so dejected a condition. This is rendered as the reason why he was so ready to heal the wounded traveller, Luk. x. 33, 34. *When he saw him, he had compassion on him, and bound up his wounds.* Jesus Christ hath lost none of his tenderness by going into Heaven; he is still

touched with the sensible feeling of our infirmities, Heb. iv. 15, this inclines him to this readiness.

III. *That he may not lose the glory of that work which he hath begun.* The humbling and convincing of proud sinners is as truly the work of Christ, as the restoring of humbled sinners. 'Tis his work to prick as well as to comfort the heart. Now if he should humble and convince a sinner, and then leave him, and proceed no farther, he would lose the honor of what he hath done. The soul doth not heartily praise Christ for conviction, till conviction be carried on to conversion. The soul so long as it abides under the pains of conviction, apprehends no love, but only wrath and anger, and so long as the love of Christ is unseen, the glory of Christ is not proclaimed. Now Christ will not lose the glory of the first work, therefore is he so careful and ready to carry on the second work,

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *Let this preserve all that are in such a condition from despair.* Satan's great plot upon convinced and humbled sinners, is to drive them to despair. As he endeavours to heighten, and harden unbroken sinners to presumption, so his great design is to affright humbled sinners to despair. This doctrine is a good preservative against such temptations; you that see sin and complain of your spiritual sickness, know this to your comfort, that as Christ hath prepared you for healing, so he will be ready to heal you.

Object. I have been a long time under these heart-pricking convictions, and yet cannot find any healing; my wounds are as wide and as deep as ever they were. I have lien many months, yea many years, under the apprehensions of sin and wrath, and yet am not healed. How shall I believe this doctrine?

Sol. 1. *Many sinners are healed who do not apprehend themselves to be healed.* Many wounded sinners will not believe themselves to be healed, unless they could find no scar or spot of sin upon them; they think they are not healed of sin, because they are not quite delivered both from the being, and acting of sin. They even look to find as perfect healing on earth, as they shall have in Heaven. But we must know that a person may be healed, both of the guilt of sin by justification, and of the dominion of sin by Sancti-

fication, and yet still find many sores of sin upon, and new sores breaking out every day in him. *Paul* was healed, when he cried out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. vii. 24. *David* was healed, and yet cries out, *My wounds stink, and are corrupt through my foolishness,* Psl. xxxviii. 5. And again, v. 7., *My loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh.* When the love of sin, the secret delight in sin, the allowance of sin, the commanding rule of sin, are removed, though there continue many wounds and scars upon the soul, the cure of sin is wrought, and that which is wanting shall perfectly be finished.

2. *Many sinners keep themselves from being healed by their own default.* They keep terror and apprehensions of wrath upon their souls, because they will not close with the promises of the Gospel. Though the comforts of the Gospel be held out ever so clearly, and with ever so much persuasion, yet they will have none of them. They are not humbled enough, as they think, they are not so prepared as they should be; therefore they will not come to Christ to close with him as with a Saviour, nor apply the promises of the Gospel, but reject them, and put them away as none of their portion. This is the case of abundance of sinners. Is it any wonder if such say, they are not healed? 'Tis because they will not be healed. They are not worthy of mercy, and therefore they will have none. They do not consider that all our worthiness stands in the sense of our own unworthiness. They do not consider that they do not come to bring fulness to Christ, but to draw out of Christ's fulness, Joh. i. 14. If such sinners would but lay aside this spiritual pride, and close with Christ, because they see they are unworthy of him, they should find that he would in a short time spiritually heal them. For he is willing to heal, and willing to do it speedily. Jesus Christ never did, never will, put any sin-lamenting sinner to any unnecessary trouble, to any unnecessary delay.

2. *Let all the people of God, especially the ministry of God, be ready to follow Christ's example.* When you see, or know of any soul that is wounded with sin, apply what healing medicines you can, that they may be healed. 'Tis given in charge to the ministers of God, both in the Old and New Testament, Isa. xxxv. 3., and 1 Thes. v. 14.

As it is cruel mercy to prostitute the comforts of the Gospel to proud sinners, so is it great cruelty to withhold the cordials of the Gospel from such sinners as are burdened with their sins. Jesus Christ will take it very kindly at any man's hand, that will help forward the curing of a wounded sinner; he expects it at the hands of his ministers. As they must be *Boanerges's* to secure sleepy sinners, so they must be *Barnabases* to mourning sinners. A wounded spirit is an insupportable burden, Prov. xviii. 14. The more insupportable the burden is, the greater charity it is to be the means to support the spirit under it.

3. *Let this be a motive to all sick sinners to come to Christ.* This is enough to persuade you to come to him, because there is none else who can heal you. You must either come to him, or else you must die in your sins. But this is more, he is willing to heal you. There is a natural shyness in sinners, that see their sin, to come to Christ. 'Tis hard to drive them. Cast away this sinfulness, slothfulness, and come to him; cast yourselves at his feet, and say, *Lord, heal us.*

Object. 1. I have been a sinner of a very great magnitude.

Sol. 1. Not greater than Christ hath cured. Not greater than he can cure, Isa. i. 18 Isa. lv 8, 9.

2. Did ever Christ upbraid any with the greatness of their sins, that did see, and bewail them?

3. Make them not greater, by refusing the Physician which God hath sent from his bosom to cure you.

Object. 2. I have continued long in them.

1. They are not of so long a continuance as some that Christ hath cured.

2. Make them not of longer continuance by staying still in them.

Object. 3. I fear the time of healing is past.

1. While Christ calls, the time is not past.

2. 'Tis a sin for any man to think the time past.

3. He can heal thee at the last gasp. Adventure on, sinner! 'Tis better to die coming to (were it so) than running from Christ. You have both his promise and his oath; that he will not cast you out. He that came to call sinners to repentance, will not reject repenting sinners.

SERMON XII. JOHN 8—12.

"I am the Light of the World."

IN the former chapter we read of the cruel severity of the High Priests and Pharisees against our Saviour. He had, by the excellency of his preaching, gained much upon the affections of the people that resorted to hear him; very many believed on him, saith the text, and said, *When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this Man hath done?* The chief Priests and Pharisees, hearing that such things were murmured among the people, presently send away officers to apprehend his person, and bring him before the council. The officers, instead of bringing Christ's person, were so taken with his preaching, that they return with a full testimony both of his person and doctrine. *Never man spake like this man.* Whereupon the Pharisees are so enraged, that they presently denounce execrations upon all that adhere to him. *Nicodemus*, who was one of the council, stands up; and, by a political argument, staves them off from any further proceedings against Christ, till they had heard him speak. He does not directly defend either the person or doctrine of Christ, but by a prudent and sober argument, labours that all further dispute about him might be laid aside, till, according to the law of God, they had heard him, and received full proof of his actions. This doth incense their envious hearts, not only against *Nicodemus*, but even against his country also. And thereupon, by the wonderful power of God, the assembly is broken up, not without some tumultuous confusion. *And every man went to his own house.* Our Saviour that night departs from *Jerusalem*, and lodgeth in the Mount of Olives, a place not far from *Jerusalem*, whither he was wont oft to resort. He would not lodge in so bloody and ungrateful a city; nor did he ever lodge in *Jerusalem* again (as *Chemnitius* observes) till the night before his Passion. The inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, for fear of their *Governors*, durst not receive him into their houses, and Christ, knowing their malice, would not trust himself amongst them; and therefore departs to the Mount of Olives, partly to refresh his body with necessary rest, and partly that he might have more liberty for meditation and prayer. The next day, our Saviour comes early in the

morning to the temple, and there sits down, as his manner was, to teach the people. Though they sought to take away his life, yet he still endeavoured to save their souls, and therefore comes early to teach in the temple. *The Scribes and Pharisees, understanding that he was teaching in the temple, thinking to find an occasion against him, brought to him a woman taken in the act of adultery, and desire to know his judgment in the case, whether, according to the law of Moses, she should be stoned to death or no?* Our Saviour, knowing their hearts, declines to be a judge in the case. He came not into the world to be a political judge, and therefore will not determine either one way or other. But though he will not be a judge, yet will he be a spiritual physician; and therefore, that he may convince them of their hypocrisy, speaks thus: *He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her.* These words so work upon their consciences, that they depart one by one, as men self-condemned, and leave Jesus alone, and the woman standing in the midst. Our Saviour, after he had given some spiritual counsel to the woman, dismisseth her, and returns to preach again to the people, from which he had been hindered too long by this impertinent act of the Scribes and Pharisees. The first doctrine he delivers to them is contained in the text, *I am the light of the world.* Here are two words to be explained a little, *light, world.*

Light. This word is taken in Scripture two ways.

1. *Properly.*
2. *Metaphorically, or improperly.*

First, *Properly.* For that noble quality which enlightens the world, called *the light of this world*, Joh. xi. 9. *Lux est claritas et splendor in corpore luminoso vel extrâ à corpore luminoso exiens, quæ et lumen dicitur.* This natural light was the first perfect visible creature that God made. It was the first day's work, Gen. i. 3.

Secondly, *Improperly, or metaphorically.* And so it is put for several things, as they carry some resemblance to light, *viz.*

1. The Word of God, Psl. cxix. cv. 2 Pet. i. 19.
2. For the Ministers of God, Mat. v. 14.
3. For Regenerate Men, Eph. v. 8.

4. For the state of conversion, Acts xxvi. 18.
5. For prosperity, and comfort, Esth. viii. 16. Psl. xcvi. 11.
6. For deliverance from trouble, Isa. ix. 2.
7. For all outward good, Job xxx. 26.
8. For the glory of Heaven, Col. i. 2.
9. For knowledge, Dan. v. 11. Isa. lx. 3.
10. For God's special favour, Psl. iv. 6.
11. For posterity, Prov. xx. 20, 1 Kings xi. 36.
12. For God himself, 1 Joh. i. 5.
13. For Christ; so 'tis used in the text. In what respects we shall afterwards see.

The World. The Greek word is (*kosmos*,) *Mundus*; from that real and orderly digestion, and composition of things that are in the world. God hath made all things in number, weight, and measure. The world is an orderly beautiful piece; it's used here (some think) to take away the difference between Jews and Gentiles; others think it's taken for the world of the elect; but I rather think in this place, it's taken for all sorts of men, to whom this light is offered. This benefit saith *Calvin*, is not offered to one, or a few, but to all the world; though few receive it, yet the tender of it is made to all, according to that of our Saviour, Mar. xvi. 15. The words are a proposition, in which are;

- I. The Subject, *Jesus Christ*.
- II. The Prædicate, *The light of the world*.
- III. The Copulative, joining these together, (*eimi*,) all put together make this observation.

Doct. *That Jesus Christ is the spiritual light of the world.* Jesus Christ in three respects, is the natural light of the world as he is God.

I. *He created the light.* The first light that ever shined in the world was his creature. The Sun, Moon and Stars, which are the vessels of natural light, are the works of his hands. He as well as the Father is that Jehovah, who at first said, *Let their be light, and there was light*, Gen. i. 3. *For all things were made by him, and without him was not made any thing that was made*, Joh. 1. 3. All the luminaries of Heaven, which carry the light of nature abroad, are his creatures.

H. *He preserves the light.* The sin of mankind would extinguish those vessels of light, those lamps of the world, did not the Lord Jesus Christ, by his divine power and providence keep them burning. When the sun is set, and darkness spread upon the world, it would never rise again if Christ did not give it a command.

III. *He it is that created the eye of man, and endued it with power to see the light.* It is he that (as God) formed the eye of man, and gave it power to behold the light of the Sun. It is he also, that by his providence opens the eye, when it is by sleep shut up in darkness. These windows of the body would be pitched up for ever, if Christ did not open them morning by morning. *David's prayer, Psl. xiii. 3. must be our daily prayer, Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.* In all these respects, Christ according as he is God, is the natural light of the world; and as mediator, he is the spiritual light of the world. He was so when he was on earth, and that both by his doctrine, and example; and he is still the spiritual light of men. The Scripture doth often affirm this of Christ; see a few places, Joh. i. 9. that was (speaking of Christ) the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, Joh. xii. 35, 36, 46. What can be more express? The Prophets who prophesied of him, spake of him as a light, Isa. xlii. 6. *I give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.* And Isa. xlix. 6. *I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth.* He is therefore compared to the *day-star*, Luk. 1. 78. to the Sun, Mal. iv. ii. As all natural light is collected into the vessel of the Sun, and by it dispensed to the world; so all spiritual light is gathered together, and placed in Christ the sun of righteousness, and by him communicated unto all those whom God hath given him.

In the opening of this doctrine, I shall handle three things.

(1.) Wherein the proportion between Christ and light stands.

(2.) How Christ doth dispense the light which is in him.

(3.) How Christ is different from all other lights.

First, the resemblance between Christ and light stands in seven things.

I. *Light hath a manifest quality.* It doth discover and make appear things that in darkness lie unseen. Darkness is a thick veil and shadow under which things and persons are concealed, but light removes that shadow, and shews both itself and every other thing in its own nature. When you would see what a thing is, if you do not know it, you bring it forth to the light, and then it appears. Whatsoever doth make manifest, the same is light, Eph. v. 13. Jesus Christ in this respect is well compared to light. He discovers and makes manifest to men that which they never saw before. How many rare mysteries hath Christ discovered to the sons of men? When he came into the world, he revealed those secrets that before were either not known, or not so fully known. The Apostle speaks of this, Eph. iii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9. When Christ comes to a soul, what discoveries doth he make there?

(1.) That sin which lay hid for many years is now manifest; that pride, that unbelief, that covetousness, which was not discovered before, is now made manifest. The very secrets of the heart are made known when this light begins to shine, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. The soul wonders, that so much wickedness should be so long undiscerned.

(2.) That shining beauty which is in grace, which was not before discerned, is now made manifest. He sees godliness to be another kind of thing than he ever apprehended it to be. He sees a loveliness in every duty of God's worship, a loveliness in every act of holiness which he could not have believed, so that he is able to say, with the blind man restored by Christ, *This I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.* Christ hath the discovering quality of light.

II. *Light hath a directive virtue.* It guides men in their way. The traveller, by the benefit of the light, sees what path to keep, and which way to turn in his intended journey. Our Saviour mentions this effect of light, Joh. xi. 9, 10. Now Christ is fitly called a light in this regard. He it is that doth direct the sons of men in the way to life. And therefore he is called, not only the light by which we see, but the guide that leads us, Luk. i. 79. Yea, he is called not only the light and the guide, but the way in which we walk, Joh. xiv. 6. Jesus Christ is sent by his Father from Heaven, to direct his elect to Heaven. He is

the great pilot of his church, that doth steer it through the tempestuous seas of this world to the haven of glory.

III. *Light hath a penetrating virtue.* Light is of all creatures that are material, the most immaterial ; it is of so subtile a nature, that it conveys itself into the least crevice. You can hardly make any fence so close, as wholly to keep out the light. Jesus Christ hath a penetrating and searching power. No heart so close, but his eye is in it ; no conscience so dark, but he sees to the bottom of it. See Heb. iv. 13. *All things are naked and open to his eyes, and every creature is manifest in his sight.*

IV. *Light hath a cheering and warming virtue.* The light contributes much to the vegetation, growth, and life of plants, and other creatures. Light and motion are the cause of that heat which the heavenly bodies send down upon the earth. Light is that instrument whereby all the influences of heaven are communicated and dispensed to the world. The motions of nature are both quickened, and comforted by the light ; and by it all the births of nature are cheered and comforted. Jesus Christ hath a cheering, comforting, and quickening virtue. 'Tis by influences from Christ, spiritual life and comfort are obtained and preserved. The prophet speaks of this virtue of Christ, under this metaphor of light, Mal. iv. 2. All that spiritual liveliness and briskness that believers have at any time in their hearts, is from the beaming wings of Christ, the sun of righteousness. He is a heart-cheering, a heart-warming, a heart-quickening Saviour.

V. *Light hath a purifying virtue.* Fogs and mists that are gathered in darkness, are dispersed and scattered when the light comes. When a candle is lighted and set up in a room, if there be any damps, they gather about it. Light is the fining-pot of nature. The world would be an unwholesome pesthouse, if it had not light. Jesus Christ hath a purifying and a cleansing virtue. By virtue from him it is, that those nasty filthinesses of sin, which are in the soul, are purged away, Heb. viii. 14. All the Levitical ceremonial purifications, used in the law, were types of him. The prophet compares him to a refiner and purifier of silver. Mal. iii. 3. By his blood he purifies the soul from the guilt of sin. By his grace he cleanseth the soul from the filth of sin. The prophet compares him to a

fountain set open for purification, Ezek. xiii. 1. All that ever were, or ever shall be cleansed from the filthiness of sin, are cleansed by Jesus Christ.

VI. *Light is of an undefilable nature.* Though it pass through the most polluted places, yet it contracts no defilement; it cleanseth all things, but is defiled by nothing; it is a quality so spiritual, that nothing can fasten upon it to pollute it. Jesus Christ is fitly resembled to light in this respect; he is not capable of any defilement; he assumed sinful nature without the least sin; he had the likeness of sinful flesh, Rom: viii. 3. but not the least sin in his flesh. In the days of his flesh he did as a spiritual physician, repair to all sorts of sinners, but he carried away from them no pollution at all. He conversed with *Mary Magdalen*, with *Zaccheus* the publican, and other publicans and sinners, without the least taint of corruption. He was born, he lived and died, in a corrupt generation, in a very pest-house of sin, without the least tincture of sin. He lived and died holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners.

VII. *The nature of light is hard to be known.* The philosophers are much troubled about defining and describing it. 'Tis not a substantial form, because it is perceived by the sight, which no substantial form is. 'Tis not a body, because then when the light passeth through a perspicuous body, two bodies would be in one place, which is against all philosophy and reason: nor is it an efflux from a luminous body, for then the Sun by it's continual shining, would be deprived of light; but it is an accidental form, or a patible quality, and so very hard to be described. The Scripture speaks of the difficulty of searching out the nature of the light perfectly by any mortal man, Job xxxviii. 19, 20, 21, 24.; only he who is the Father of lights doth perfectly understand it. Jesus Christ is not perfectly to be understood by any living man. *Who can declare his generation, as he is the Son of God?* Isa. liii. 8. *Who can declare his conception exactly, as he is the Son of man?* Luk. i. 35. He that created the flesh of Christ, is only able perfectly to understand it's manner. Who is able to declare the mystery of the hypostatical union of the two natures in one person exactly? We believe these things, comprehend them perfectly we are not able. His name is wonderful, Isa. ix. 6.

there are such wonderful mysteries in the nature of this light, as no man, or creature can fully and perfectly comprehend.

Secondly, Christ dispenses this light these two ways :

I. *By the preaching of his Gospel in the public ministry thereof.* The ministers are called Stars, and the ministry or preaching of the Gospel, is that orb in which this light shines, and by which it is communicated and dispensed to the world. *We preach Christ crucified*, 1 Cor. i. 23. Where the Gospel hath never been preached, this light hath never yet shined. This is the chariot in which this glorious light is carried about ordinarily in the world, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4, 5, 6.

II. *By the virtuous efficacy of his spirit in his ministry.* The most powerful preaching of Christ that can be, will be to no purpose without these inward workings of the spirit. By the Spirit of Christ three things are done.

(1.) *The blindness of the mind is removed.* The holy Ghost causes the scales to fall from the eyes.

(2.) *A visive faculty is bestowed.* This is that which the Apostle calls the enlightening of the eyes of the understanding, Eph. i. 18.

(3.) *Power is given actually to elose with the light.* The soul is enabled to follow the light, or to walk in the light, Joh. xii. 25. So that by these two means this light is communicated. By the preaching of the Gospel, the object is made present ; and by the Spirit of Christ the object is made visible, the faculty of sight is bestowed, and a power of following the light is created.

Thirdly, Christ is different from all other lights, viz. Prophets, Apostles, who are called lights, Mat. v. 14. He is different from all them five ways.

I. *They are lights only ministerially.* They are lights only as they do by their office hold out this light. They are lights, as the candlestick may be called a light, because it carries the candle where the light is. But Christ is a light of, and in himself : he is a light, not ministerially, but originally : the fountain of light.

II. *They are small lights.* Christ is a great light. They

were but like little farthing candles, Christ is a great torch, which reacheth from heaven to earth. They are light as the stars are light, a little glimmering, borrowed light. Christ is light as the sun, and therefore he is called *the sun of righteousness*, Mal. iv. 2. All the Prophets and Apostles were but *scintillulæ lucis*, little sparks of light, mere glow worms; but Jesus Christ is an immense, incomparable light, Isa. ix. 2.

III. *They are lights that have some darkness in them.* The clearest and brightest of the Prophets and Apostles were not without some darkness and obscurity. *But Jesus Christ is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.* Christ is a light that hath no snuff in him. He ever burns and shines brightly.

IV. *They were lights that could not give sight.* They were not able to make men either see their light, or follow their light. They could not give eyes to the blind; but Jesus is such a light as can give sight. He can open the blind eyes. He can constrain the soul to follow the light.

V. *They were setting lights.* They, when they had run their course, left shining; they were wasting and decaying lights. *John Baptist* was a burning and shining light; but now he is neither as to this world, only his example and doctrine shines still in the Scripture. But Jesus Christ is an everlasting light. He hath been shining ever since that promise made to *Adam*, Gen. iii. 5. And he shall be a light for ever and ever. He is the light of grace here, and he shall be the light of glory in heaven.

The Uses are, Information, Exhortation, Consolation.

1. *Information.* In four particulars.

First, *Behold the necessity of Christ.* He is as necessary for the soul, as light is for the body. Light is a very needful and pleasant thing. Jesus Christ is as necessary as he is pleasant.

Secondly, *The miserable condition of such as want an interest in Christ.* Whether they be nations or persons, their condition is marvellously sad. They are indeed in a state of darkness. The Scripture affirms all to be in darkness that are without Christ, Eph. v. 8. *Ye were sometimes in darkness, &c.* Luk. i. 79. Isa. ix. 2. The people that sat in darkness have seen a great light. Where this day-star

never shone, 'tis yet midnight with that soul ; and a dark condition is a very miserable condition. The misery of it will appear in three particulars.

(1.) *A dark condition is a condition of fear.* Those that can be bold in the light, are usually surprised with fears in darkness. A black day is a terrible day, Job iii. 5. *Let the blackness of the day terrify it.* Those that are without Jesus Christ are subject to many terrors and fears, which the children of light are delivered from. The Scripture makes mention of horrible dread which the wicked are exposed unto. The name of *Pashur* may be given to every one that is without Christ, *Magor Missabib*, Jer. xx. 3. because they are liable to such shaking panic fears, Prov. xxviii. 1. *The wicked flee when no man pursueth them.* God threatens fears to the wicked as their portion, Lev. xxvi. 36. *I will send a faintness in their hearts, the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them.* Wicked men are sometimes without actual shakings ; they have some kind of joy, peace, and security. But

I. They are always liable to fears : they are under guilt, which lays the foundation of fear.

II. Their peace, when it seems to be most strong and settled, is presently, upon the least spark of God's anger, thrown into their consciences, turned into terror. We have an instance of it in *Belshazzar*, Dan. v. 5, 6. The least manifestation of God's anger dashes all their joy, and creates great trembling in their spirits. The prophet sets out this terror by an excellent metaphor, Isa. lvii 20. The sea is sometimes so calm and smooth, that you may cast a die upon the face of it ; but one quarter of an hour's tempest puts it into a dreadful combustion.

(2.) *A dark condition is a misguiding condition.* 'Tis full of wanderings. When men want the light of this world, how do they mislead others ? and how easily are they misled by others ? *He that walketh in darkness*, saith our Saviour, *knoweth not whither he goeth*, Joh. xii. 35. Those that are without Jesus Christ, are in a spiritual maze or labyrinth. They mislead all that follow them, and are misled by every blind guide that goes before them. Men that are without Christ are great wanderers. You may easily carry them into the most dangerous ways. This is the true

reason of all those sad wanderings and deviations of men from the truth of God, and from the old ways of holiness, which are at this very day. Though they pretend not only light, but a greater measure of light than others have attained unto; yet the truth is, they want this true and celestial light; and therefore are carried away after the shining of every *ignis fatuus* that Satan casts in their way. They wander from verity to falsehood, from a seeming strictness to profaneness, from one corrupt principle to another, till they turn mere sceptics, mere atheists, without all religion. The apostle calls them *planetæ asteres*, Jude xiii. to whom, if they return not from their wanderings, is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

(3.) *A dark condition is a condition unfit for action.* We call darkness blind mans holy-day; because in darkness a seeing man can work no more than a blind man. When that fearful darkness was over the land of *Egypt*, they did not stir from their seats for three days together, Exo. x. 23. Man goeth forth to his work and labour until the evening, Psl. civ. 23. When the black shadow of the night hath drawn the curtain of nature over the world, then are instruments of working laid aside. Those that are without Jesus Christ are unfit for any spiritual work; they can neither pray, nor repent, nor believe, &c. Whatever work of this nature they take in hand, they spoil it utterly. They mar all the work of God for want of light, Joh. xv. 5. *The natural man doth not understand the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. A man is as able to polish a jewel at midnight without a candle, as a man that is without Jesus Christ is able handsomely to perfect any spiritual work. This is the second inference, the misery of men without Christ.

III. *The excellency of Jesus Christ.* Light is a very excellent and glorious creature. Truly *light is pleasant, and a joyful thing it is for the eyes to see the Sun*, Eccl. xi. 7. Jesus Christ is an excellent and precious person. He is very pleasant and desirable to those that have eyes to behold him. He is all things spiritually to the soul which it wants, or can desire; bread, drink, physic, life, raiment, light, all in all. The Scripture speaks much of his glory and brightness. No creature comparable to the light

for glory. God is therefore said to be clothed with light as with a garment, Psl. civ. 2. Christ is not glorious to the eyes of blind men, so the prophet foretold, Isa. liii. 2, 3. But to them that have eyes to see him, he is a very glorious person. Jesus Christ hath a four-fold excellency above other lights.

First, *They are created lights.* The Sun, Moon, and Stars, the vessels of light are but creatures, Gen. i. You read of the time and manner of their creation. But Christ is an uncreated light. The humanity indeed is a creature, but the divinity which doth enlighten the humanity, is not a creature. *Athanasius* calls him light of lights, very God of very God. He is the Father of lights, in his divinity.

Secondly, *They are lights that cannot give sight.* Bring men that are blind to the Sun, let it shine with his greatest splendor upon them, and they will not be recovered. The light of the Sun hath dazzled and helped to put out many seeing eyes, but it never restored to sight one blind eye. But Jesus Christ is a light that gives sight to the blind; he is an enlightening light, he doth by his shining upon the soul, create in the soul a faculty of seeing, which it never had before, 2 Cor. iv. 6. When this light shines in the heart, the light of the knowledge of God is created. Hence the apostle calls Christ *a light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world*, Joh. i. 9.

Thirdly, *They are lights only to the body.* The soul is not better for the light of the Sun. But Christ is a spiritual light; he is a light to the conscience, to the will, to the affections, to the whole inward man.

Fourthly, *They give light but in one place at once.* The Sun shines but in one hemisphere at once. 'Tis night with us, when 'tis day with our antipodes; and when the Sun shines there, it is darkness with us. But now Jesus Christ shines as a light in all places of the world at one, and the same time: he can cast his beams when he pleaseth all over the world. Christ shines in *England* and in *America* at one, and the same moment. And he hath told us of a time, when he will give light to all the world.

(4.) *Behold, from hence the excellency of the Gospel.* Jesus Christ is the light of the world, as he is held out in the

gospel. The gospel is the candlestick in which this candle is set; the gospel is the orb in which this Sun shines. There is no other sufficient and safe way of discovery of Christ, besides the gospel.

There are three lights which God hath afforded to the heathen.

The light of creation, Rom. i. 19, 20.

The light of righteousness, which the schools call *Synteresin*.

The light of a natural conscience, Rom. ii. 15.

Now although these be true lights, yet they are not sufficient lights. They make a discovery of a God-head unto men, Rom. i. 19, 20.; they discover so much to men, as to leave them without excuse, Rom. i. 20. but they cannot discover a Saviour to man. They cannot discover a Mediator, God and man in one person. None of the wise philosophers of the world, that had studied the mysteries of nature, and attained to very great experience in them, were able to find out reconciliation by Christ. No, no, the gospel is the only ordinary way of this discovery, Joh. v. 39. *Search the Scriptures. They are they which testify of me*, Rom. i. 16, 17. *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith*. So 1 Cor. i. 21. *After that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*. Now then, the gospel being the only standing-way of discovering Christ to men, it must needs be a very excellent thing. Hence it is that the gospel is called a light, as well as Christ, Ps. cix. 105. *Thy word is as a lamp unto my feet, &c.* and 2 Pet. i. 18, 19. *We have a more sure word of prophecy, &c.* Herein lies the great glory and dignity of the gospel, that it is the only mediate fixed candlestick, in and by which, Jesus Christ the true light is discovered and made known. This is the first use.

Use II. Exhortation. It commends four things to us.

I. Bless God for this light. We have very great cause to bless God for the natural light, that he hath set up so glorious a torch as the Sun is, to give light to the inhabitants of the earth. What cause have we then to bless God for this spiritual light, that this *day-star from on high* hath visited

us? We might have wandered in darkness, as the heathen do, if this light had not in the glorious gospel, shined amongst us. Bless God every day for this light, especially you that have Christ not only a light to you, but a light in you. You that have this Sun risen, and shining in your hearts, in and by conversion, you have cause to bless God. Many shall be damned and perish that have Christ as a light to them, but they shall eternally be saved, that have Christ the true light shining in them. How much cause had the *Israelites in Goshen* to bless God, that they had light in their dwellings, Exo. x. 23. when there was thick darkness in the land of *Egypt*? much more cause have you to bless his great name, that the Lord Christ is a burning light set up in your hearts; whereas many that live under the same light that you do, are still in the darkness of an unconverted estate. *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord*, Eph. v. 8. This calls for loud, cordial, lasting, everlasting praises to God and Christ, that this light is a saving light to you, when it is a damning light occasionally to very many.

II. *Whenever you see the light, remember Jesus Christ.* When you open your eyes in the morning, and behold the light of the sun, then think of Christ the true sun of righteousness. When you see the necessity of light, and the benefit of light, then think of the necessity men have of, and the benefit which they receive by Jesus Christ. He is far more useful than the natural light, inasmuch as he enlightens the soul. God would have us spiritualize the whole creation. There is hardly any creature which is of special and common use; but doth, or may serve as a ladder, on which we may ascend into Heaven, and be brought nearer to God. Bread, water, garments, the rain, the dew, the light, and a thousand other creatures, do daily preach some spiritual doctrine to us. It will be happy for us if we take out spiritual lessons from earthly things.

III. *Improve the light.* In three things.

(1.) *Be not contented that Christ is a light to you, but labor that he may be a light within you.* Get Christ into your hearts, into your consciences. 'Tis damnable to live in darkness, even when the light of the creatures shines, Rom. i. 20. 'Tis double damnation to live in darkness, where Jesus Christ the true light shines. *Arise, shine, for thy light is*

come, saith the Prophet to the church, Isa. lx. 1. If you be not enlightened savingly by this light, it had been better for you that you had never heard nor seen it. Better you had never seen this pillar of fire, than not to be savingly enlightened by it.

(2.) *Be sure to walk in the light.* This is our Saviour's counsel, Joh. xii. 35. What is it to walk in the light, but to translate the light into our life? To walk as children of the light, Eph. v. 8. To walk in the light of Christ's example; to walk according to the direction of Christ's doctrine. To walk regularly, evenly, inoffensively; to have our conversation as becometh the Gospel, Phil. i. 27. This is the way to honour the light, to communicate the light to others. He that walks as Christ walked, holds out this light to the world; a holy conversation makes a Christian as a golden candlestick to hold out Christ to such as do not see the Saviour.

(3.) *Acknowledge from whence all your light comes.* That you have the light of knowledge, the light of saving grace, the light of spiritual comfort is from Jesus Christ. He is the fountain of all true spiritual light. The light you have is a beam of this sun. You had never enjoyed one spark of it, had not Christ freely communicated it.

IV. *Receive nothing as light, but what comes from Jesus.* That which thwarts him, is not light, but darkness. That which comes not from Christ's word, is not light, but darkness. Men, in the present days, talk of much light. They call smoke light, darkness light. Well, the only way to judge of true light, is to bring it to Christ; and to bring it to him, is to bring it to the Scriptures. There it is that Christ and that truth shines. A written revelation from Scripture is more sure than an immediate revelation from Heaven. 2 Pet. i. 18, 19. *I must try all revelations by scripture.* Now the touchstone is more sure than that by which it is tried. There are some things which men cry up as lights, which quench Christ, the true light; the doctrine of the Socinians, Arminians, Papists, &c.

Use III. *Consolation.* This may comfort the children of God in all their present darknesses. The saints of God are in this life under many darknesses. They are under the darkness of sin, not under the power of it, Col. i. 13. Yet

they have still some of this darkness in them. They are under the darkness of ignorance, for they know but in part, the darkness of outward affliction, Mic. vii. 8. they are under the darkness of spiritual discomfort sometimes, Isa. l. 10. Well, here is your comfort; Christ is light in all these respects. He is a full light, a communicative light, a light always present. Go to him in all these cases, depend upon him; put him in mind of this name of light, and you shall find that he will turn your darkness into light. He will be a light to deliver, to instruct, to comfort, to quicken you. He hath received all the light he hath as Mediator, that he may communicate it to you.

SERMON XIII. HEB. 13—20.

“Our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep.”

THIS verse is a part of the epilogue, or conclusion, of the whole Epistle. The conclusion begins at v. 18, and it reacheth to the end of the chapter. He had, v. 18, 19, intreated their remembrance of him: in this verse, as an argument to persuade them, he falls a praying for them. The thing he prays for on their behalf, is laid down, v. 21. *Make you perfect, &c.* The person to whom he prays is God, whom he describes by that glorious title, *The God of peace*. The arguments he hath to support his faith for the audience of his prayer, are these three.

First, The power of God, expressed by one great act of his power, *The resurrection of Christ from the dead*.

The Second is, From Christ's office, or relation to the church for whom he prays. *He is the great Shepherd of the sheep*. He prays in his name who was nearly related to the church, therefore he did not doubt of audience.

The Third is the way whereby he expected his requests to be granted, *The blood of the everlasting Covenant*: he came to a God of peace by a Mediator through a covenant of blood, therefore he did not fear the speeding and issuing of his requests. The words which I have read, have two things in them which shall be the parts of the text.

I. *A description of the people of God. They are sheep.*

II. *A description of Christ in relation to them. That great Shepherd.*

Sheep. This word is taken in Scripture either properly, or metaphorically. *Properly*, for that kind of creatures which are known by this name. *Metaphorically*, and so it hath a double signification. It's taken sometimes for harmless and innocent people. So it's used, 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. (2.) For the elect of God, especially such of them as are regenerated and called. And so it's used in this text.

Shepherd. This word is likewise used in a proper, and in a metaphorical sense. In a proper sense, it's used for such as keep and feed flocks, whether they be flocks of sheep, or other cattle. In this sense, *Abel* is called a shepherd, Gen. iv. 2 ; and the sons of *Jacob* that kept cattle, because they dealt in sheep, and other cattle, Gen. xlv. 32. 34. In this sense, *Moses* is called a shepherd, Exo. iii. 1. and *David* before his anointing to the office of a King, Psl. lxxviii. 70, 71. In a metaphorical sense, and so it's referred to other persons and employments, as they carry some resemblance to this office; as,

I. Magistrates are called shepherds. *Cyrus* hath this name given him of God, Isa. xlv. 28. Thus *Moses* the ruler of *Israel*, is called *the shepherd of God's flock*, Isa. lxiii. 11. *Homer* calls *Agamemnon*, *poimena laon* (shepherd of the people) 'Tis an usual expression in Scripture, to call magistrates shepherds, Jer. vi. 3. *The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her.* That is, foreign Princes with their soldiers prepared for war. So Mic. v. 5. *We shall raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.*

II. *Ministers.* Governors of the Church are called shepherds, Jer. iii. 15. *I will give you pastors, or shepherds after mine own heart.* Jer. xvii. 16. *I have not hastened from being a pastor, or shepherd, from following thee,* Isa. lvi. 11. speaking of the slothful ministers, he saith, *They are shepherds that cannot understand.* And the usual notion whereby ministers are set out in the New Testament is, Pastors and Teachers, Eph. iv. 11. There is a great affinity between the work of a minister, and the work of a shepherd.

III. *God himself is called a shepherd.* *David* gives him

that name, Psl. xxiii. 1. ; and Psl. lxxx. 1. He is called *the shepherd of Israel* ; because his care of *Israel* hath great resemblance to the care of a shepherd over a flock.

IV. Jesus Christ is called a shepherd, as in many other places, so in this text. 'Tis him of whom we are to understand this text, *Our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd*. He is called *ton poimena ton megan, that great shepherd*, to distinguish him from all other shepherds, who, in comparison of him, are very small and inconsiderable shepherds. The observations are two, according to the two metaphors, viz.

I. The people of God are sheep.

II. Jesus Christ is the great Shepherd of these sheep.

Doct. 1. *The people of God are sheep*. 'Tis a very usual metaphor whereby godly persons are described in Scripture. Sometimes they are called *God's sheep*, Ezek. xxxiv. 6. 11. 12. Sometimes they are called *Christ's sheep* ; so frequently, Joh. x. and Joh. xxi. 16. *Feed my sheep*, saith Christ to *Peter*. And sometimes they are called sheep, without any mention of the owner of them. Take two or three texts for further confirmation, Psl. lxxiv. 1. *Why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?* Psl. lxxix. 13. *So we thy flock, and sheep of thy pasture*, Psl. c. 3. *We are the sheep of his pasture*.

In the handling of this point, I shall open two things.

I. In what respects they are compared to sheep.

II. How they come to be sheep.

First, They are like sheep in five respects.

1. *Sheep are very harmless and innocent creatures*. Wolves tear, and hurt, and do mischief ; but sheep are innocent and inoffensive creatures ; they neither bite with their teeth, or kick with the heel, as other creatures do. Innocent and harmless persons are called sheep in Scripture, 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. *These sheep, what have they done?* The people of God are a harmless and innocent generation, though the world looks upon them as turbulent, &c. They know it is the will of God that they be *harmless and blameless*, Phil. ii. 15. ; and they desire that they may so walk, and endeavour to walk without offence, that no man may receive the least detriment or prejudice by them, either in temporals or spirituals, see the Apostle *Paul*, Acts xxiv. 16. The same

desire is in all the sheep of Christ ; and if they do, through mistake or inadvertency, harm any, they are never at rest till they have made satisfaction.

2. *Sheep are meek and patient creatures.* The sheep is an emblem of meekness, he suffers the shearer to take his fleece, and the butcher his blood, without the least forwardness or resistance. The meekness of the lamb is grown into a proverb. *Quum fervet maxime, tam placidum quam eorum reddo, Terence.* The people of God are a patient and meek people. They are called the meek of the earth, because they excel in grace, Psl. lxxvi. 9. Zeph. ii. 3. They can endure loss, bear afflictions, suffer persecutions for the name of Christ, without impatience. They do not render reviling for reviling, or railing for railing. Yea, they repay sweet for bitter, blessing for cursing. When *Shimei* rails on *David*, *Come out, thou man of blood, &c.* how meekly doth he bear it? *Let him curse, for God hath bid him curse David*, 2 Sam. xv. 10. When he was so unnaturally used by his son *Absalom*, how sweetly doth he subject himself, and kiss the rod? Psl. xxxix. 9. A child of God may sometimes fall into a fit of forwardness and impatience, as *Jonah* did. Even meek *Moses* was once too much transported with passion, Num. xx. 10, 11.; but they are much grieved for such angry heats. The frame and bent of their hearts is towards the grace of meekness; and what the heart of a person would be, that God interprets it really to be. Wicked men are turbulent spirits, but God's people are of a calm and placid temper.

3. *Sheep are clean creatures.* Swine are used to wallow in filthy and miry places. But sheep desire and delight to preserve themselves clean; they love pure streams and green pastures. The people of God are a clean and holy generation. See Psl. lxxiii. 1. Our Saviour calls them the *pure in heart*, Mat. v. 8. They study holiness, they pray for holiness, they allow no spot, yea, they are heartily grieved when they bemoire themselves, and are never at rest till they are cleansed again. See the Prophet *David*, when he had fallen into the mire and defiled himself, how earnest is he with God for cleansing, Psl. li. 2.; and again, v. 7.; and yet again, v. 10. *Create in me a clean heart, O God.* He that hath the nature of a true sheep of Christ in him, though he may

fall into sin, yet he cannot lie and wallow in uncleanness, as the wicked do.

4. *Sheep are simple creatures.* Some kind of brute creatures are very cunning and crafty, as the *fox*, the *ape*, &c.; but the sheep is of a simple nature. You often call silly men sheepish men. The people of God are a simple, plain-hearted people, not only without gall, but without guile, Psal. xxxii. ii. That which is said of their father *Jacob*, Gen. xxv. 27, is true of all his posterity in their proportion; they are *plain-hearted men*. Though they have hypocrisy in them, as they have other corruptions, yet they are not hypocrites. They know not, nor are they desirous to learn, the art of dissimulation or equivocation. They cannot look one way, and row another; they love not to have oil in their mouths, and swords in their hearts. They desire to be sincere, without mixture. They cannot carry fire in one hand, and water in the other. They are strangers, and desire to be strangers for ever, to those doublings, fraudulencies, and subtile artifices, which hypocrites use. They can pray, and do pray with *David*, Psal. cxix. 8, *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes*, &c. Their tongue and heart go both one way; they desire that God would keep their hearts right, and that their tongue may be the interpreter of their heart; they chuse to act, not according to the principles of carnal policy, but the rules of gospel piety; they had rather be the meanest of Christ's disciples, than the highest of *Machiavel's* scholars.

5. *Sheep are creatures of a tractable nature.* They are easy to be led. A child may drive a flock of sheep with more ease, than many can a herd of other cattle. The people of God are of a ductile, tractable nature; they are more easily guided than other men. Shew them what the mind of God is, let them have the rule clear, and then a little child may lead them. We have a gospel prophecy of the tameness which grace works upon the hearts of men when it comes in power upon them, Isa. xi. 6. Other men cannot be ruled by all the importunity that God and men use. Though *precept be upon precept, and line upon line*, Isa. xxviii. 10, yet they will be extravagant and loose; but godly men are of a ductile frame. They desire that God would lead them, and guide them in his way, and they are willing to be led. They will not resist truth, or stand out

against convictions as other men do; they are pliable and yielding to all divine revelations from the word of God. No man shall lead them by his fancy or opinion, without a rule, though he be ever so wise, or so seemingly godly; but any man shall guide them, and turn them any way, even an enemy, an inferior, if he can bring a sufficient authority from God's word. Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth.

Secondly, *How they come to be sheep.* They are not so by nature, for by nature they are *goats, wolves, tigers.* They have not one property of a sheep in them by nature. They are as bad as the worst by nature, Eph. ii. 2. How then are they sheep? 'Tis by grace and regeneration. Jesus Christ, the lamb of God, communicates his nature to them by his spirit, and so of goats makes them sheep. He infuseth into them a new nature, and so makes them sheep. (1.) God chuseth them for his sheep. (2.) Christ purchaseth them. (3.) Having chosen them from eternity, and purchased them, he doth in time by his spirit change their natures, bring them into his fold, and puts all the good properties of sheep into them: whereas they were before hurtful, he makes them harmless; whereas they were froward, he makes them patient; whereas they were filthy, he makes them clean; whereas they were hypocritical, he makes them plain-hearted; and whereas they were before unruly, he now makes them tractable.

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *See then the great difference between converted and unconverted.* The one are *flowers*, the other are *weeds*; the one *light*, the other *darkness*; the one *wheat*, the other *tares*; the one *goats*, the other *sheep*. Grace puts a great difference between man and man, Prov. xii. 26.

II. *Let all of us labour to be sheep.* Beg of Christ that he would remove the wolfishness of thy nature, and make thee a sheep. At the day of judgment, all men would be glad to be placed among the sheep, Mat. xxv. 32, 33.

III. *Let all the people of God carry themselves as sheep.* Study those things which I named before, be sure they be found in you, otherwise you cannot have any hopes that you are sheep. And to those let me add two or three duties more, which are found in all the sheep of God and Christ.

(1.) *Labour to be profitable.* Sheep are very profitable creatures; their flesh is for food, their fleece for clothing, their milk for nourishing; their very excrements are profitable, the husbandman finds benefit even by them. A believer should be a profitable creature. It's said of *Onesimus*, that after he was converted, he became a profitable servant, Phil. xi. Christians should endeavour to be profitable every way as sheep are. You should feed others by your knowledge; nourish others by your comforts, refresh others by your graces. All your speeches, and your actions, should some way or other tend to the benefit of your brethren. An unprofitable sheep is a contradiction. 'Tis a glorious thing to profit others. 'Tis one end of all that good which God hath bestowed upon you. *The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal*, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. xii. 7.

(2.) *Labour to be fruitful.* Sheep are a very fruitful creature, they do much enrich him that keeps them, they often bring forth twins, Cant. iv. 2. Believers should be fruitful: *Rich in good works*, 1 Tim. vi. 18. *Filled with the fruits of righteousness*, Phil. i. 11. A Christian should be like those sheep which are mentioned, Cant. iv. 2. Christ feeds his sheep in large pastures, and in fat pastures; therefore they should bring forth good fruit, and much fruit.

(3.) *Labour to be sociable one with another.* No creatures are of a more sociable nature than sheep; they feed, and fold, and live quietly together. The sheep is a rare emblem of unity. Believers should in this be like sheep, maintaining love and unity amongst themselves. These graces, love, and unity, and oneness of mind, are much pressed in Scripture, Eph. iv. *init.* Phil. ii. *init.* Biting and devouring one another, is not to be like the sheep, but rather like the wolf. The greater noise the devouring creatures make, the closer do sheep keep together.

O that Christians would be like sheep in this property! Fearful things are spoken against them that make divisions in the Church of God, *Rom. xvi. 17, 18.*

II. How great is the advantage which God's people will get by uniting amongst themselves!

First, *Unity is their strength.* Fellow-travellers, while they keep together, strengthen one another against invaders; if they divide, they are easily destroyed.

Secondly, *Unity is their glory*, Ps. cxxxiii. 1. Pearls are called *Unions* (some say) because they are seldom found two together; others say, to denote the preciousness of union. Unity amongst God's people is the best pearl they can wear, Cant. iv. 9.

Thirdly, *Unity makes way for the communication of gifts*, Eph. iv. 15, 16.

Fourthly, Remember the communion of saints, 1 Joh. i. 3.

Fifthly, Remember how often Christ prayed for it, Joh. xvii. 21, 22, 23. 'Tis his great honour; only we must know that all our union must be in the truth, union in the Lord; otherwise it is not the union of sheep, but the union of robbers, Prov. i. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Doctrine 2. *Christ is the great shepherd of these sheep.* In many places of Scripture, the name and office of a shepherd is attributed to Christ. Consider these that follow, Isa. xl. 11, *He shall feed his flock as a shepherd.* 'Tis a prophecy of Christ, as the context shews, Ezek. xxxiv. 23. God promiseth Christ under this notion; *I will set one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; even my servant David.* And again, Ezek. xxxvii. 24. *David my servant shall be King over them, and they all shall have one shepherd,* Zach. xiii. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, &c.; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.* 'Tis applied to Christ, Mat. xxvi. 13. Our Saviour himself doth give himself this name, Joh. x. 10, 11, 14, 16, *I am the good shepherd, &c.* The Apostle Peter calls him so, 1 Pet. ii. 25, *The shepherd and bishop of our souls;* and c. v. 4, he calls him, *archipoimena, the chief shepherd: when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.* Two things I shall open by way of explication.

I. The parallel between Christ and a shepherd.

II. Why Christ is called that great shepherd.

First, the parallel between Christ and a shepherd, viz,

1. *A shepherd feeds his flock.* 'Tis his work to provide both pasture and water for his sheep, Ezek. xxxiv. 2. Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? A good shepherd will take care that his flock may have both grass and water. When they have eaten one place bare, he drives them to another; when one fountain is dry, he leads

them to another; he had rather want bread himself, than his sheep should want provision. *He feeds them with his own flesh and blood*, Joh. vi. 5. Christ provides sufficient food and nourishment for his sheep. Three things prove Christ a feeder. (1.) *He hath provided ordinances for them.* Every ordinance is a spiritual pasture, or fountain for the feeding of Christ's sheep, Psl. xxiii. 2. *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.* What are those pastures of tender grass, or those waters of quietness, but the ordinances of the gospel, the fields where Christ's sheep feed, the rivers where they drink? The variety of the ordinances, shews the variety of feeding; the richness and fulness of the ordinances, shews the plentifulness of Christ's feeding: here are many pastures, and every pasture so rich, that it can never be eaten bare; here are many streams, and every stream so deep and broad, that it can never be drawn dry; the sheep have been eating in these pastures ever since Christ had a Church on earth, and yet they are as full of grass as ever. They have been drinking at these streams ever since *Adam*, and yet they are brim full to this very day; and will so continue, till the sheep are above the use of them in Heaven. (2) *He hath provided shepherds to dispense these ordinances.* The sheep can neither feed nor water themselves, unless they have some one to help them. Ministers by virtue of their office, open these pastures, and lead the sheep into them; they roll away the stones from the mouth of these wells, and draw water for them, that they may drink and be satisfied. Pastors and teachers are given of Christ, *for the edification of his Church*, Eph. iv. 11, 12. This was the work of the prophets, apostles, and evangelists in their generations, and is of pastors and teachers, the present ministers of his Church; yea, we shall find how severely Christ hath charged them, under the pain of his highest displeasure, to be *diligent in feeding the flock*, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.; and hath allured them by the most glorious promises, that they should be careful in this work, 1 Pet. v. 2, 4; and Joh. xxi. 15, 16. And he furnisheth them with gifts and abilities for this very purpose, Luk. xii. 42. (3.) *He doth by his spirit bless the feeding which he hath provided.* He hath promised to be present with the sheep and the shepherds, whenever they come to feed in these pastures, and drink at these

waters; to bless their food and water for the good of their souls. He promised it, Mat. xxviii. ult. and he doth to this day make it good; he doth and will walk in the midst of the golden candlesticks, to bless the feeding of the sheep to the end of the world. He hath purchased the Holy Ghost, to be bestowed both on the sheep and shepherds for this very purpose.

2. *A shepherd knows his flock.* He knows the number of his sheep, and knows them particularly from other sheep. Those phrases in Scripture concerning the sheep's *passing under the rod*, Lev xxvii. 32; and *passing under the hand of him that telleth them*, Jer. xxxiii. 13, shew the knowledge that good shepherds have of their flocks; they know one of their own sheep, though it be in the midst of a strange flock. Jesus knows his sheep exactly. He knows both the number, and the particular persons, Joh. x. 14, though they be in dungeons, prisons; though the wool and skin be torn off by persecution, yet still they are within the knowledge of Christ. Consider four things. (1.) *He knows them as they are given to him by the Father in his eternal election.* God the Father hath given all the elect unto Christ from eternity, Joh. xvii. 6. By virtue of this donation doth Christ know them. He hath taken them by number from the Father, and he is to surrender them by number to him again. Their names are all written from eternity in the Lamb's book of life, Rev. xxi. 27.; while this book continues, they cannot wear out of the knowledge of Christ. (2.) *He knows them, as he sees in them his own image.* Every sheep of Christ doth partake by grace of the image of Christ. There is a conformity of likeness between him and them. His Father's name is written upon their foreheads, Rev. xiv. 1. What is this name of God, but that divine nature, communicated from Christ to every sheep of the fold? So long as this name abides on their foreheads, (and it shall abide for ever) they cannot wear out of the knowledge of Christ. (3.) *He knows them as he sees the sprinkling of his own blood upon them.* Every sheep of Christ is washed white in the Lamb's blood, Rev. vii. 14. They are clothed with his righteousness for the justification of their persons. They have his merits, in which they are invested. Now so long as the garment remains upon them, (and it can never be worn, or stolen off) Christ must needs

know them. (4.) *He knows them; as he remembers the service they have done for him in the world.* Every sheep of Christ that hath attained unto years of discretion, hath with care served Christ in its generation. They have often prayed to him, often worshipped him; and to their very uttermost, laid out themselves for his glory in the world, &c. And he hath recorded and set down all their good actions; and as long as he remembers their works, he cannot forget or be ignorant of their persons, Mat. xxv. 34, 35, &c. They have fed him in his hungry members, have clothed him in his naked members, &c. Christ will never forget these holy actions; therefore he can never forget their persons by whom they were performed. They have both done, and suffered for him, therefore he knows them; and will know them.

3. *A shepherd preserves his flock.* 'Tis the work of a shepherd to defend his sheep. David hazarded his own life to defend his sheep from the invading lion, and the ravenous bear, 1 Sam. xvii. 34. Shepherds watch their flocks by night as well as by day, to preserve them from devouring creatures. So did Jacob, Gen. xxxi. 40, and those shepherds to whom the birth of Christ was first preached, Luk. ii. 8. Jesus is the defender of his sheep; he preserves them carefully from those that would devour them. The Devil hath been way-laying, and attempting them ever since the fall; and yet the eye of this shepherd was so diligent and watchful, that he was never able to get the least lamb of the flock; nor shall he ever gain one of them, for they shall be all folded in Heaven. The sheep of Christ are all sealed in their foreheads, Rev. vii. 3, 4. Why are they sealed? (1.) For distinction. (2.) For secrecy. (3.) For security. Neither men nor devils can break open this seal. This similitude is used, Cant. iv. 12, *A garden enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed*; under all those expressions is set out the fence which Christ makes about his sheep for their preservation. Though Christ sometime suffer their bodies to be torn and devoured by men, and their souls to be assaulted, yet he will not suffer their souls to be destroyed. He once laid down his life for them, Joh. x. 11, 15.; and having died for them, he will preserve them. There is a six-fold defence which Christ sets upon every sheep for his preservation from Satan. (1.) *His death.* The grave of Christ is a fold, in which the sheep sleep safely; his sepulchre is a

hedge about the Church, I mean the virtue and merit of his death. Christ, by his death, hath overcome the Devil and all his host, Col. ii. 15. ; he hath taken him captive, and delivered the sheep out of his hands. Now, so long as the death of Christ is in force, (and in force it shall be for ever and ever) the sheep shall be defended. The sea of Christ's blood doth encompass every sheep of the fold ; and Satan must either wade through, or dry up that sea, before he can annoy the sheep, as to their eternal salvation. Roar and rage he may, ruin or tear in pieces he cannot ; the bottomless sea of Christ's blood flows continually about them. (2.) *His intercession.* The Scripture makes mention of the advocateship of Christ for his people, Heb. vii. 25, *He lives for ever to make intercession* ; therefore he is able to save, *eis to panteles*. This advocateship of Christ hath three properties. (1.) *It is full.* (2.) *'Tis constant.* (3.) *'Tis effectual.* This intercession is the sheep's safeguard. Christ must be cast out from the work of mediation, before any of his sheep can be eternally hurt ; and cast out he cannot be, for his priesthood is an everlasting priesthood, Psl. cx. 4, *Thou art a priest for ever, &c.* (3.) *The presence of Christ.* We learn from Scripture that he is ever present with his sheep ; he is not one moment absent from the fold ; he, by his spiritual presence, lodgeth with them every night, and walketh with them all the day, Rev. xiv. 1, *He stands on the Mount Sion* ; he stands not in a running, but in a watching posture. The devil must drive Christ from his standing, before he can snatch away any of the sheep, for he stands there as a sure guard to them. (4.) *The mystical union between him and the sheep.* Joh. xvii. 23, *I in them, and Thou in me.* Every sheep grows in the Shepherd's side, as a member of his body. Now this union is an indissoluble union. As the natural union between the Son and the Father can never be dissolved, so neither can the mystical union between Christ and the sheep. This union is a strong and mighty hedge about the sheep. The devil must drag Christ to hell, before he can drag any of the sheep thither, for they are *bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh.* (5.) *The promise of Christ.* He hath engaged his word, and this engagement is recorded in the Scriptures, that *the gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church*, Mat. xvi. 18. This promise is not a rash, or indiscreet, but

a deliberate, sober, advised promise. 'Tis not the promise of a fraudulent person, but of a faithful Saviour; for he is the *Amen*, the faithful and true witness, Rev. iii. 14. This is the Churches safety; Satan must disannul, before he can devour the sheep, and disannulled it cannot be, for his word endureth for ever in Heaven. (6.) *His recommending of them to his Father.* A little before his death, he made his last will and testament; amongst other things, he did solemnly commend the tuition of his sheep to his fathers care, intreating him by all the dearness between them, that he would preserve them from the Devil, and all his evil designs against them, Joh. xvii. 11, 15.; he had received them from the father upon his recommendation, v. 9. and he had kept them safe while he was with them, and now he intreats the father, that as he had kept them upon his recommendation, so he would for his sake, undertake the tuition of them, v. 12. *While I was in the world, I kept them, &c.* So long as Christ's testament is in force, or God will accept of Christ's bequeathment (and accept of it he will) for ever the sheep shall be safe. (4.) *A shepherd gathers his sheep when they are scattered.* When either by dogs, or storms, or their own voluntary wanderings, they have been dispersed; the shepherd's work is to gather them again, Ezek. xxxiv. 12. Jesus is a good shepherd in this respect; the sheep are wanton, they wander and stray: Christ reduceth and brings them to the fold. How often doth every sheep wander? yet, often as they wander, doth Christ reduce them. You know the parable, Luk. xv. 4, 5, 6, &c.; and he will never leave, till he has gathered them into Heaven, where they shall scatter no more; he gathers them from their first dispersion in unregeneracy, when they wander upon the mounts of profaneness and unbelief, &c. When they are scattered by persecution, temptation, &c. he still gathers them. He gathered them when they were scattered in *Babylon*; in the dispersion in the Apostle's days, Acts viii. He hath gentile and jewish sheep dispersed. One end of the ministry is to gather the scattered sheep, who were never converted. Another end is to gather them that wander after conversion. See the office of Christ to this purpose, Eph. i. 10. He is the centre in which all things meet. All are to be gathered together by him, to him, and in him; his meaning is, all the elect are gathered to a head, as the word signifies,

(*anakepalaiosasthai*,) in Christ who is the head of the body; and at the day of judgment, he will gather them all together, and after that they shall be free from scattering, Mat. xxv. 31, 32, 33, &c.

2. *Shepherds are to heal their sheep*, Ezek. xxxiv 4. Christ is a healer. (1.) By his promises, they are oil. (2.) By his threatenings. (3.) By Church-censures, Christ's physic; that's wine, Luk. x. 34.

Secondly, why Christ is called *that great shepherd*? This I told you, was a discriminating note, to put a difference between him and all other shepherds; both those that went before him, and those that should succeed him. to the end of the world. There is a vast difference between Christ and other shepherds. It stands in the eight following particulars.

I. In the dignity of his person above others. *All other shepherds were only men*, prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers; the best of them were but men. Though many of them had gifts and abilities extraordinary, yet they were but men; but this shepherd is both God and man. He is the Son of God, as well as the Son of *Adam*. Never was there any shepherd in the church before him, or shall any arise after him, of whom it can be said, this shepherd is equal with God. This is said of Christ, by the father himself, Zech. xiii. 7. *Awake O sword against the man that is my fellow*, saith the Lord of Hosts, *smite the shepherd*. No shepherd beside this, had the honour to be by oneness and identity of nature, the fellow and companion of God.

II. *He is the great shepherd, because of the great abilities he hath*. Other shepherds, although many of them had singular abilities, both for feeding and ruling; yet, compared with the abilities of Christ, they were but small. Other shepherds, though they were richly furnished, had not any of them, all kinds of gifts. God scattered his gifts and graces amongst them, in some one sort, in others another sort, to maintain unity amongst them. See 1 Cor. xii. 4, to 10. Some of them did excel chiefly in one thing, some in another; and then, none of them had any other than a stinted and measured portion, either of gifts, or grace; see Rom. xii. 3, 4, 6. Those that had the miraculous gift of healing, could not heal that way when they pleased; *Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick*, 2 Tim. iv. 20. *Paul would*

not have left him sick, if he could have cured him miraculously. But this great shepherd hath all kinds of abilities; he is as good at one part of the pastoral work, as at another; the gifts which were scattered amongst the other shepherds, all meet in this shepherd; he is as good at feeding, as at ruling, and at ruling, as at feeding. To one shepherd is given the *word of wisdom*, to another the *word of knowledge*, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 8., but all these are equally given to Christ; he is as exact in the word of wisdom, as in the word of knowledge, he can perform equally and exactly, the work of the pastor, and of the teacher; and then as he hath all kind of abilities, so he hath an unlimited fulness of all, Joh. iii. 44. God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him. He hath not only the fulness of the *vessel*, but of the *fountain*; the fulness of the God-head dwelling bodily in him; and besides, all the abilities of other shepherds are not from themselves, but from him; but the abilities of Christ are from himself. The divinity hath filled the humanity with all those gifts which it hath received for the work of a Mediator.

III. *He is the great shepherd in regard of his propriety in the sheep.* Jesus Christ is not only the shepherd of the sheep, but their owner also. He often calls them *his sheep*, Joh. x.; he is the possessor, as well as the feeder of the sheep: other shepherds are only shepherds, not proprietors. They are forbidden to *carry themselves as Lords over the sheep*, 1 Pet. v. iii. The sheep are said to be theirs only in a ministerial way; as the care and charge is committed to them; but they are Christ's in an hereditary way; the Father hath given them to him, Joh. xvii. 6. He hath by his own blood purchased them, Acts xxviii. 20 and they have voluntarily dedicated themselves to him for a possession; they have by baptism, dedicated themselves to Christ. Other shepherds are only servants, but Christ is the Lord of the flock. This is that which the apostle mentions, as the difference between Christ and *Moses*, Heb. iii. 5, 6. *Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house.* 'Tis the horrible pride of that man of sin, that dares to call himself the head of the Church, because this title is only proper Christ.

IV. *Other shepherds are sheep as well as shepherds.* prophets, apostles, evangelists, and all the pastors which

succeed them, are sheep as well as shepherds. They are shepherds ministerially in respect of the church; but are sheep really in regard of Christ. They have as much need of feeding, watering, and governing, as any of the sheep have; by the same ordinances with which they feed others, they are themselves fed; by their preaching and praying, they instruct, encourage, and comfort themselves as well as others. But Jesus Christ is only a shepherd; he feeds others, but hath no need of being fed himself. He teacheth others, but he himself hath no need of being taught. Preaching, prayer, sacraments, all other ordinances, are as useful for other shepherds, as they are for the sheep; but they are not at all useful or necessary to Christ. When he was on earth, he made use of them, to shew his obedience to the law, to teach others their duty, and to sanctify them to others that should make use of them; he wanted them not then. He stood in need of nothing for which the ordinances were appointed; much less doth he stand in need of them now: but all other shepherds stand in as absolute need of the ordinances as the sheep.

V. *Christ is the great shepherd in regard of his dominion over all other shepherds.* He is as truly the Lord of the shepherds as of the sheep. He is the master of all the shepherds which ever were, or shall be in the church, to the end of the world, Eccl. xii. 11.

(1) They received their authority from him; he made them shepherds of the flock, Eph. iv. 11; set them over his house; invested them with all the power they had: they that do not come into the pastoral office and authority by him, are not shepherds, but thieves; Joh. x. 1, 2. (2.) They are to act, and administer all they do as shepherds, in his name, and in his name only. All acts of feeding, of ruling, are to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul excommunicated the incestuous person, he did it in this name, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5, *In the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the power of our Lord Jesus, deliver such a one unto Satan.* All church acts of government are to be done by the shepherds of the church in Christ's name, and by power derived from Christ. And then, (3.) They are to be accountable to him for all their misdoings; he will judge them for all their miscarriages, either towards one another or towards the flock.

VI. *Christ is the great shepherd in regard of the success he can give to what he doth.* Other shepherds may lead the sheep to the pastures, or drive them to the waters, but they cannot make either successful to the sheep. They cannot give digestion, concoction, or growth, 1 Cor. iii. 7. But this great shepherd is able to do all this; he can give the sheep an appetite to eat and drink, and can, by his blessing, make their eating and drinking successful. He can make the sheep strong, and lusty, and vigorous; he can exercise discipline, and give them an heart to submit to it. and to be bettered by it; he can lay a plaster to their wounds, and when he hath done so, can say, the wound shall be healed. He can call them from their wanderings, and speak so effectually, that they shall return, and wander no more.

VII. *He is the great shepherd, because of the great jurisdiction he hath over the sheep.* All other shepherds that ever were or shall be have but a limited power; they cannot do what they would, or make any rules for the ordering of the flock; nor can they teach any doctrines to the flock, but what Christ hath taught, 1 Cor. xi. 23. But Jesus Christ, the great shepherd, hath a boundless, unlimited authority, and can do what he pleases with the sheep; he can and hath made what laws pleased himself for the ordering of the sheep: he can cut, lance, wound, put them into fat pastures, or into barren pastures, as he pleases. His dominion is absolute over them.

VIII. *He is the great shepherd in regard of the latitude and extent of his jurisdiction.* Other shepherds are shepherds over particular flocks; but Christ is the universal shepherd, the whole catholic church is his flock; he is the universal shepherd of the church. That which the Pope falsely and treasonably challengeth to himself, to be the universal bishop, is most truly affirmed of Christ. The apostles were shepherds to the universal church where they came, but it was only to the church that was in their generation; but Jesus Christ hath been, and still is, the universal shepherd in all generations. He was the shepherd of the church in the prophets' time, and in the apostles' days, and he will be the shepherd to the end of the world. Thus the psalmist foretels by way of prophecy, Psl. lxxii. 8, *His dominion*

shall be from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Ever since the church was, Christ was shepherd; and while God hath a flock in the world, Jesus Christ will continue to be the great shepherd thereof, Eccl. xii. 11.

The Uses concern both the inferior shepherds, and the whole flock of sheep.

First, Concerning the shepherds; here are five duties.

(1.) *This may teach them to act for Christ.* It becomes all the ministers whom Christ hath made shepherds, to consider that he is the great shepherd. They are but ministerial, inferior, subordinate shepherds; therefore, whatever their parts be, or whatever interest they have in the hearts of the sheep, they are still to remember that Christ is the great shepherd, and that it is their duty to lay out all their abilities and interest, in gathering together the sheep unto Christ. This is the character of a true shepherd; in all his actings to serve the great shepherd, whose servant he is. *John Baptist* is an eminent pattern for this; he did not serve himself, but Christ, and therefore was contented to be diminished, yea, to be nothing, so that Christ the great shepherd might be exalted. See that famous text, Joh. iii. 26, to 30. He humbles himself to the dust, that by his falling Christ may rise.

(2.) *This may teach them not to lord it over the sheep.* Ministers, though shepherds in respect of the sheep, yet they are but sheep in respect of Christ. This caution the apostle gives them upon this very account, 1 Pet. v. *init.* The great shepherd may do what he will, but the inferior shepherd must not do what he will, but what Christ will, 2 Cor. iv. 5.

(3.) *This may encourage them in hoping for a reward from Christ.* The great shepherd doth take an account of the diligence and faithfulness of inferior shepherds; and if they be faithful in their work, whatever their success be, the great shepherd will abundantly reward them. He that hath called himself the great shepherd, knows what belongs to the work of a shepherd; and therefore he will consider him according to his work. This the apostle tells the shepherds, 1 Pet. v. 1, to 4.

(4.) *This should teach them to go to this great shepherd, both*

for pastoral abilities, and for success. As they should learn to carry themselves in the managing of their pastoral work by Christ's example, the great shepherd, to be diligent, painful, watchful, and affectionate, as he was; so they should, when they want strength, wisdom, or encouragement, go to him. The great shepherd who hath set them to work, will both strengthen them in the work, and bless them with success, though not so much as they desire, yet with as much as shall make them cheerfully go on with their work.

(5.) To learn of Christ meekness, patience, painfulness, faithfulness, forbearance, and love; bearing with infirmities; zeal to preach with authority; impartiality, courage, and self-disregarding.

Secondly, concerning the sheep. Here is both instruction and consolation.

I. Instruction. They may learn three lessons from hence.

(1.) *Be ruled and governed by Christ.* It is the shepherd's work to govern as well as to feed: *poimainein* signifies both to feed and to rule. The sheep are to follow the shepherd; those that are Christ's sheep in truth, do follow him. Joh. x. 4. They follow him without disputing, and without murmuring, yea, they follow him universally. It doth not become a sheep of Christ to refuse the shepherd's conduct. The shepherd is wiser than the sheep; they will err if they follow their own counsel, but cannot wander if they follow Christ. The sheep are safe while they follow Jesus; he never led any of his flock into dangerous places. When you hear the voice of the great shepherd, be sure to yield obedience. We are to obey the voice of subordinate shepherds, yet no farther than they teach Christ's commands; but the voice of the great shepherd is to be obeyed in all things. Let me but add this one word to persuade you to it: Jesus Christ will not be a feeding shepherd, where he may not be admitted to be a ruling shepherd. The discipline of Christ is an act of mercy to the sheep; as well as his feeding.

(2.) *Create no other shepherds than what Christ sets over you.* Christ is therefore called the great shepherd, because he appoints other shepherds under him to feed the flock. 'Tis the duty of Christ's sheep to adhere to

these shepherds, and to reject all others, though they come in Christ's name. This hath been the practice of Christ's sheep heretofore, Joh. x. 5. 8, *The sheep did not hear him.* So Cant. i. 7, *Why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?* Who are those companions of Christ? False shepherds, who come in Christ's name, pretending that they are the companions of Christ. 'Tis the casting off (as much as lieth in us) the authority of the great shepherd, to make to ourselves, or to follow any other shepherds than what Christ sends. But how shall we know such shepherds as are sent of Christ? First, *If they preach Christ's doctrine, and that only.* He that preacheth that doctrine which Christ never taught, is no shepherd sent of Christ. Secondly, *If their lives be according to Christ's life.* He that lives contrary to the life of Christ, is not really to be looked upon as a shepherd of Christ. Thirdly, *If he enter in according to Christ's rule.* He that entereth not in by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. They are our Saviour's own words, Joh. x. 1, 2. We read in Scripture but of two ways of sending shepherds by Christ; the one was by immediate commission, as prophets, apostles, and evangelists were sent. This kind of mission was ever accompanied with extraordinary gifts, either of miracles, or foretelling things to come; whosoever will plead this call, must shew it by extraordinary qualifications. The other, according to established gospel-rule from Christ, by the ministry of the Church, viz. by ordination, through the imposition of the hands of preaching presbyters, of which we read, Tit. i. 5. 1 Tim. v. 22. 1 Tim. iv. 14. Acts xiii. *init.* Acts xiv. 23. I shall say but this one thing to set this duty upon your hearts: Christ's blessing cannot be expected to go along with those shepherds which he never created, Jer. xxiii. 32, *They shall not profit this people at all.* 'Tis spiritual thievery for any man to make himself a shepherd after his own fancy, and to hear such, is to be accessory to this spiritual theft, Joh. x. 8.

(3) *In all things carry yourselves as the sheep of this shepherd.* First, *Hear his voice,* Joh. x. 3. Secondly, *Love his pastures.* Rejoice in, and be thankful for that way of feeding which he hath established in his church. Christ could have appointed a more externally-glorious way of

feeding his sheep; but this plain way of feeding is most for his glory, and best for your good. The ministry of men best suits with the feeding of men. Thirdly, *Bring forth fruit to him.* Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 1 Cor. ix. 7. Do Christ what service you are able. This shepherd hath bought you with his blood, and feeds you with his blood: so great a shepherd should have great increase of his sheep. Fourthly, *Know him.* 'Tis the honour of Christ's sheep, that they are known of him; and it is their property, that they know him, Joh. x. 14. You must not only know him in his natures, offices, &c. but you must acknowledge him. When he is reviled, reproached, opposed, yet then must the sheep acknowledge him. When it's death to own him, yet then must you boldly, openly acknowledge him. He that will not acknowledge the great shepherd here, shall not be acknowledged by him as a sheep hereafter. Fifthly, Reject not those shepherds which he sends, 1 Joh. iv. 6. Luk. x. 16.

II. For Consolation. This title of Christ the great shepherd, is very comfortable for every sheep.

(1.) *That he will provide subordinate shepherds.* Though Christ be the great shepherd, yet the church wants subordinate pastors. He feeds the sheep not immediately, but by the ministry of inferior shepherds. Now he that gave them will preserve them, will continue them, will increase their gifts, will bless them with success. For your good he hath given them, and for your good he will uphold them; only you must by prayer importune him so to do. The earnest prayer of the sheep to the great shepherd, will procure a blessing upon the endeavour of the subordinate shepherds.

(2.) *In case of your present weaknesses.* Christ is a healing shepherd. You are weak, infirm, ready to miscarry. Well, know this for your comfort, that Christ the great shepherd will heal your wounds, and consider your infirmities. No sheep are more carefully tended by the shepherd, than the weak and wounded Isa. xl. 11, *He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young.*

(3.) *In case of wanderings and straggings.* You are

ready, through ignorance and blindness, to wander from the fold. Well, the great shepherd will gather you with his arm; his arm is very long, he can reach you. Whatever a shepherd will do for his sheep, that Christ will for you. But I am unworthy, &c. He that made you sheep when you were unworthy, will not suffer you to want any thing that is needful for sheep. Though you be unworthy to be used like sheep, yet Christ is so faithful, that he will fulfil towards you all the duties of a good shepherd. He is a good, as well as a great shepherd, Joh. x. 11.

SERMON XIV. JOHN 15—5.

“ I am the Vine, ye are the Branches.”

CHRIST, in this chapter, treats chiefly of three things.

I. Here is an exhortation to his disciples to continue constant in that faith, into which they were implanted, v. 1 to 8.

II. An exhortation given them to abound in good works, especially in mutual love, from v. 8 to 18.

III. Encouraging arguments against the fear of persecution, and the hatred of the world; v. 18 to the end of the chapter. His exhortation to constancy and perseverance in the faith, is pressed by the parable of the *Vine and Branches*. As the branches, when planted into the vine, do continue in it, so those that were by faith, and the doctrine of the Gospel, planted into Christ, ought to continue in him, and bring forth fruits. The uttering of this parable is thought, by *Piscator* to have been occasioned by the sight of some vine by our Saviour and his disciples, in their passing through the city. It was usual with Christ, in beholding earthly objects, to teach spiritual doctrines. From the woman of *Samaria's* coming to Jacob's well to draw water, our Lord takes occasion to speak fully of the water of life, Joh. iv. 7. 10. From the disciples entreating him to eat meat, he

preaches about his zeal in promoting his Father's works, Joh. iv. 32. 34. From the people's flocking about him for material bread, he takes occasion to speak of the bread of life, Joh. vi. 27. And here from the sight of a vine, as he went up and down *Jerusalem*, he takes occasion of preaching himself to be the true vine. That this sermon was preached as he walked in the city, may (saith *Piscator*) probably be gathered from c. xviii. 1, where it is said, that *When he had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron. This going forth*, saith he, cannot be understood of his going forth of the house, (for, c. xiv. v. last, he went out of that before) but of his going out of the city, where he had preached this sermon, as he walked up and down. It is not very material where this sermon was preached, though more likely it was preached in some house, than in the streets of the city; especially if that be true which some conjecture, that that prayer, c. xvii. which belongs to this story, was prayed at the institution of the Supper. It is not (I say) very material. 'Tis Christ's doctrine, wherever it was preached. In the text are two things.

(1.) A description of Christ in relation to believers; *I am the Vine.*

(2.) A description of believers in relation to Christ; *Ye are the Branches.* By *vine* we are to understand not the vineyard, or place planted with vines, (though the Greek word here used, as *Calvin* notes, doth signify a vineyard) but the vine, or plant itself, especially the root into which it is ingrafted. By *branches* we are to understand those slips which are ingrafted into the stocks of the vine. Here are two points: 1. Christ is a vine. 2. Believers are its branches.

Doct. 1. *That Christ is a vine.* We are not to understand it in a proper sense, for Christ, to speak properly, is neither *vine*, *door*, nor *rock*, &c. but the eternal Son of God, who is both God and man in one person; it is metaphorical, and he is so called by way of resemblance. There is a very great similitude between Christ and the vine: twice expressly doth our Saviour in this case call himself a vine, v. 1. *I am the true vine*, and v. 5. *I am the vine*, and many times covertly in those expressions of abiding in him, to which

he exhorts his hearers. For opening this metaphor.

I. In respect of which nature Christ is called a vine.

II. Wherein the resemblance stands, or why so called.

III. The excellency of Christ above all other vines.

I. For the first. *Christ is compared to a vine in respect of both natures.* Although some resemblances do relate more chiefly to the divine nature, and some more chiefly to the human, yet the general is to be understood of both natures. Christ is a vine in the whole person, as he is Mediator, God and Man; in that respect and latitude, in which believers are branches ingrafted into him. Now the union between Christ and believers, is not between them and the humanity of Christ only, nor between them and the divinity only, but between them and the whole person. Not only is the soul of a believer united to the soul of Christ, nor the flesh of a believer to the flesh of Christ, but the whole person of every believer is united to the whole person of Christ.

II. In what respects is Christ a vine? In four ways. (1) *In the meanness of his outward condition.* The vine is not like the cedar for height, nor the oak for strength; 'tis but mean to the outward view. Christ, when he came into the world, did not come with any great outward pomp and glory. There was indeed a star at his birth, that brought the wise men from the East to worship him; but for his outward condition generally, it was very mean. He was born in a stable, and laid in the manger; born of a mean virgin, and but mean while on earth. His kingdom is not administered with that outward state and splendor that earthly kingdoms are: he declined all outward glory and greatness. See Isa. xlii. 2. *He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground, &c.* The reason is that which he himself gives to Pilate, Joh. xviii. 36. *His kingdom was not of this world: he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,* Mat. xx. 28. He came to make others great, but himself little; to fill others, but to empty himself, Phil. ii. 7. He came in the form of a servant, to be trampled upon, reviled, disgraced, and at last crucified. External pomp was not suitable to such a design. (2.) *In his fruitfulness.* The vine is a fruitful plant; though it hath little pomp, yet much plenty. Its fruitfulness ap-

pears three ways. 1. *It brings forth pleasant fruit.* No plant yields more delightful fruit than the vine; the grape is delightful, the wine a very pleasant thing; the true blood of the grape, Deut. xxxii. 14. 2. *It yields profitable fruit.* The blood of the grape, if it be moderately and seasonably taken, warms the heart, and cheers the spirits. *It makes glad the heart of man*, Psl. civ. 15. It is a very great repairer of nature's decays; it's both food and physic. 3. *It yields great plenty of fruit.* Other trees bring forth single fruit; but the vine brings forth clusters. There are sometimes hundreds of berries in one cluster, and many of those clusters upon one branch. The Scripture useth the vine to set out plenty of increase. *Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of thy house*, Psl. cxxviii. 3. So Hos. xiv. 7. Jesus Christ may well be compared to the vine for fruitfulness in all these respects. (1.) *He brings forth pleasant fruit.* All the fruits that grow upon Christ are very pleasant, Cant. ii. 4, *I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* All the trees of paradise did not afford such pleasant fruit. Consider what the fruits of this vine are, and you will grant that they are pleasant. I shall present you with four clusters, by which you may judge of the rest. First, the fruits of his death: I name but six. (1.) *The satisfaction of divine justice.* The appeasing of God's anger towards the elect, Isa. liii. 6. Christ, by his death, did as perfectly satisfy the demands of justice, as though God had never been offended; he made full payment. (2.) *The reconciliation of believers to God.* He hath not only paid what justice required, but perfectly made agreement between God and the sinner, that now, through Christ, God is become as perfect a friend to the believer, as he was to Adam in paradise. God hath not in his heart the least grudge towards his person. See Eph. ii. 14, 15, and Col. i. 21, 22. (3.) *The working out of a complete righteousness for the sinner.* Such a righteousness, as that the sinner may, with a holy boldness, challenge the law of God to find fault with it, Rom. v. 17, 18, 19. This is called, in divers respects, *the righteousness of God*, Rom. i. 17. *The righteousness of faith*, Phil. iii. 9. *Rom. iv. 13.* *The righteousness of Christ*, Rom. v. 18. (4.) *The destroying of him that had the power of death.* See Col. ii. 15, and Heb. ii. 14. Satan's

supremacy over the the soul is abolished, and the captivated soul made the Lord's free-man. (5.) *The sweetening and perfuming of the grave, and the freedom of the sinner from the fear of death*, Heb. ii. 15. (6.) *The killing of the power of sin*. Christ, by dying for sin, slew it, so that it can never damn any of the elect, Rom. vi. 4. 6. Secondly, the fruits of his resurrection. Take four: (1.) *Spiritual vivification*. The soul of a believer is raised up, and empowered to walk in newness of life. This the apostle applies principally to the resurrection of Christ, in Col. ii. 12, 13, *You being dead in your sins, &c. He hath quickened together with him, &c.* (2.) *An assured evidence of full justification from sin*. This the apostle ascribes to the resurrection of Christ, Rom. iv. 25, *He was raised again for our justification*. The resurrection of Christ from the grave is a full proof that all the debt is paid; the discharge of the prisoner is a clear testimony of the discharge of the debt, Isa. liii. 8, *He was taken from prison and from judgment*. On the contrary, 1 Cor. xv. 17, *If Christ be not raised, we are yet in our sins*. (3.) *An argument for the resurrection of our bodies at the last day*. If the head be raised, the body shall not lie for ever in the grave; the resurrection of Christ is a pledge of ours, as the first fruits were unto the Jews a pledge of the ensuing harvest, 1 Cor. xv. 20. And therefore the Apostle saith, that *Believers are raised up together with Christ*, Eph. ii. 6. They did rise in their representative when Christ was raised. (4.) *The confirmation of our hope of Heaven*, 1 Pet. i. 3, *We are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*. The doctrine of Christ's resurrection is the nourishment of the grace of hope. Thirdly, *The fruits of his ascension*. I shall name five. 1. *Leading captivity captive*, Eph. iv. 8. By returning to Heaven from whence he came, he did publicly carry his spoil with him, and declared that all the enemies of our salvation were perfectly brought under. As great conquerors, when they have subdued their enemies, lead captive those whom they have overcome; so Christ, the great captain of our salvation, did, by his ascension, let his people see that their spiritual enemies were all eternally vanquished. 2. *The conferring of ministerial gifts, yea, the office of the ministry on his church*, Eph. iv. 8. The ministry of the church is a fruit of Christ's ascension.

And 'tis as possible to pull him out of Heaven, as to destroy what he so solemnly settled at his ascension. 3 *The more plentiful effusion of his spirit upon his church* Joh. xvi. 7, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I go away, I will send him.* Christ, when he departed, poured forth his spirit in greater plenty than ever it was before, to supply the want of his bodily presence. 4. *Preparations of mansions for his members*, Joh. xiv. 3. As a man when he hath espoused a wife, provides a house for her abode against the day of marriage; so Christ, having espoused the church, goes to Heaven before-hand, to make all things ready for their entertainment against the marriage day. 5. *An assured evidence of their corporal ascension.* Christ ascended and entered into Heaven as the fore-runner of his church, Heb. vi. 19. The apostle tells us, that Christ entered for us, (*uper emon*) not only for our benefit, but in our stead, to give us an undoubted assurance, that we also shall personally enter. The ascension of the head, is the *prælude* of the glorification of the members. 4. *The fruits of his intercession*; I shall name four. (1.) *Assurance of the application of all his benefits.* All Christ purchased by his death, he doth actually apply to the elect by his intercession, Isa. liii. ult. This is one fruit of Christ's intercession; believers are sure to be put into full possession of all that Christ hath merited for them by his blood-shed, Joh. xiv. 3. This some refer to his intercession. Christ, by his satisfaction, obtained for the elect a right to Heaven, and by his intercession actually applies it to them. 2. *The stopping all accusations made against them.* The law accuseth, and Satan pleads it against believers; but Christ is interceding continually at God's right hand to invalidate all these accusations. There can no sooner come in any complaint, but Christ throws it out, Rom. viii. 33, 34. 3. *Manuduction into the presence of the Father with boldness.* Christ is at God's right hand for this, that whenever a believer hath any request to prefer to God, he may take him by the hand, and bring him to the Father with confidence, Heb. iv. 14, 16. 4. *Assurance of the acceptance of our weakest services*, Rev. viii. 3, 4. The ascending of the incense out of the angel's hand before God, notes the complacency that God takes through Christ in the obedience of his saints. Put these together, and see whether

Christ do not bring forth pleasant fruit. No vineyards can shew such grapes for pleasantness as these are. (2.) *He brings forth profitable fruit.* The wine that comes out of this vine, doth cheer, refresh, strengthen, and make glad, and that, not the outward man only, but the soul and conscience also, which no other wine can do. If I should go over all these fruits again, and show you the advantage which believers have by them, you would then say, they were profitable, healing, strengthening, and quickening fruits. They remove all fears, and bring in all joy, &c. (3.) *He brings forth plenty of fruit.* I have named many, but I have named but a few of what I might name. All the graces of his Spirit; faith, love, meekness, perseverance, &c. All the promises are his fruits; eternity will be too short to measure all the fruits which grow on this vine.

III. *In the shadow which he casts over the church.* The vine is a shadowy plant, it is in the largeness of the leaves, the fittest of any plant for shadowing. Men make harbors of the vine, Mic. iv. 4. Christ is a shadow to his church, Isa. xxxii. 2. *A hiding place from the wind, a cover from the tempest, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;* the words are spoken of Christ, as is clear from the 1 v. Behold a King shall reign in righteousness: he who is there called a King, is afterwards called a shadow; *I sat under* (Cant. ii. 3.) *his shadow*; so Christ is called the church's only shadow. (1.) *He is a shadow to defend them from his Father's wrath.* God is in himself a consuming fire, Heb. xii. 29. His anger is declared against all the sins of men; he can as well cease to be, as cease to be displeased against sin, in whomsoever it is. Now Jesus is the believer's shadow, to preserve him from being burnt by his wrath. Yea, he hath by satisfying his fathers justice for sin, quenched this wrath as to believers, and this satisfaction is such a thick shadow, that whensoever the believer retreats to it, and sits under it, the wrath of God cannot reach him, to hurt him; the screen of Christ's perfect satisfaction doth continually stand between God and the believer, to preserve him from the fury of divine anger. The wrath of God must kindle upon Christ, before it can upon the believer, and upon Christ it cannot kindle; he hath once borne the wrath of God, and for ever quenched it. Since Christ became a sacrifice for sin once, God hath many

ways declared that he is well pleased with him. Abide under this shadowy vine, and the wrath of God cannot come near you. 2. *He is a shadow to defend them from the Devil's rage.* Satan is full of rage against the Godly; they have broke out of his prison, have renounced his services, have proclaimed perpetual war against him and his kingdom, and have by the grace of conversion, blotted his name out of their hearts, this fills him with rage against them; he is continually way-laying them, is daily fighting with them, and never ceaseth to tempt them, that he may destroy them, 1 Pet. v. 8. Jesus is a shadow to preserve his church from the fury of this destroyer. By his death he hath broken his head, Col. ii. 15. By his intercession he is their safeguard, from all the attempts Satan makes upon them, Luk. xxii. 31, 32. The Devil must overcome Christ, he must pluck off all the leaves of this vine, before he can devour the believer. Retreat to Christ by faith, when Satan hunts you, continue there and you may laugh at Satan and all his assaults. 3. *He is a shadow to defend them from the fury of men.* The world is a bitter enemy to the servants of Christ. They cannot walk after the fashion of the world, but must reprove it's wickedness, both by their lives and their speeches. This makes the men of the world mad against them; you see this both in the Old and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Gen. xix. 9. they were ready to tear *Lot in pieces*, because he reprov'd their filthy wickedness. In the New Testament, 1. Pet. iv. 4. because the godly cannot drink of the same waters which they do, they hate them. Christ is a shadow to preserve them from the world's fury. He did by his death obtain victory, as well over the world as over the devil, Joh. xvi. 33, and he doth shadow his church in the world from it's rage. Some particular members of his church are perhaps overcome by the world, but the body of the church can never be. And for the particular persons or churches that are ruined by them, their ruin tends their own personal salvation, and the preservation of the whole body; the blood of particular persons or churches is a sanctified seed for the enlargement of the church universal.

IV. *In the influential communications from him to the branches.* This is what is especially meant in this place; believers are compared to the branches, Christ to the vine.

As the vine doth communicate sap and nourishment to the branches, so doth Christ spiritual sap and nourishment to believers. All the church's springs are in Christ, Psl. lxxxvii. 7. Believers have nothing but what comes from him, and can do nothing that is good but by his assistance. He is the strength of their strength, the wisdom of their wisdom. God hath put all their stock and portion into his hands; they have their dependance on him, and all their supply from him. See v. 5 of this chapter, *Without, or severed from me, ye can do nothing.*

III. The excellency of Christ above all other vines. He hath the pre-eminence in seven ways. 1. *Christ is a vine immediately of God's planting.* Other vines are the plantations of men; 'tis true, in the creation, God did, by the word of his power, without the help of any creature, cause the vine, as he did all other plants, to spring, Gen. ii. 4, 5. But since then, these plants are the work of his hands. We read of a vineyard planted by *Noah* after the flood, Gen. ix. 20, and we see to this day, vines are still set by the hands of men; but Christ is the exclusive plantation of God: *God prepared him a body*, Heb. x. 5, and appointed him for the work of redemption. It could never have entered into the heart of man, nor into the understanding of angels, to have planted the Son of God as a vine for the bearing and feeding of mankind. This is what Christ declares, v. 1 of this chapter: *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.* This order of grace that Christ should be the head of life and salvation, and that the elect should be ingrafted into and saved by him, is appointed and set by God alone. He is the author of this divine husbandry; men wonder at it, the Angels of Heaven do to this very day admire it, and shall admire it to eternity, but God himself is the only inventor and author of it. It is a work of God's doing, and is, will, and ought to be marvellous in our eyes, Psl. cxviii. 23. *Behold I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, &c.* Isa. xxviii. 16. This foundation had never been laid, this vine had never been planted, had not God done it; 'tis God's husbandry. 2. *Christ is a vine that doth perpetually flourish.* Other vines are not always green in the depth of winter, they have neither leaves nor fruit when the vintage is over. Christ is a vine that is continually green; the vintage is never over with him, he knows no winter, *Jesus Christ yesterday, to*

day, and the same for ever, Heb. xiii. 8; he keeps his vigour and freshness from generation to generation; he flourishes now as gloriously as ever he did since he was planted, and he will be as green and lively to the end of the world, as now. A few years put an end to all other vines; they have their infancy, their full growth and their old age: but Christ knows no such changes; he did bear fruit the very first moment of his planting, and there will never be a time when he will cease bearing. It is always vintage-time with him. Never did the eye of man see him empty, never shall eye see him withering; he is called a tree of life, Rev. xxii. 12. because neither mortality nor old age, shall ever betide him. 3. *Christ is a vine whose fruits never abate*. Go to the fullest vine that ever grew, and pluck off but one cluster, and there is a cluster less; if you take away but one berry, there is a diminution; but Christ knows no abatement. All the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, the Saints in the Old Testament ever since *Adam*, and the Saints in the New Testament, to this day have been feeding upon him, and yet there is not one cluster less than at first; he hath not lost one berry since his first plantation. See Col. ii. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily.* Fulness is in Christ, all fulness is in him, all fulness is in him bodily, *somatikos*, that is personally, not only in efficacy and assistance, as in the Saints, but in hypostatical and personal union, and then all this fulness (*katoikei en auto*) dwells in him inseparably, undecayingly. Gather ever so much fruit from this vine, and yet he still retains his fulness. *We beheld his glory, full of grace and truth*, Joh. i. 14. All the old Saints had been eating of him since *Adam* to that day, and yet he was still full of grace, and so he continues, as if his fruit had never been touched with hands, nor tasted by any of his elect. 4 *Christ is a vine of greater extension than others*. Earthly vines are but of small compass; a few yards will measure both their length and breadth, but Christ is of great dimension, his branches reach all the world over; he hath some branches in all nations under Heaven, Rev. vii. 9. it spreads into *Asia, Europe, Africa, and America*. The universal church is the vineyard, it is dispersed throughout all nations, and every member of it is a branch of this vine. 5. *Christ is such a vine as can never lose one of his branches*. Other vines are often stript

of even those that were truly ingrafted. But this vine can never lose a branch; some branches that are ingrafted only in visible profession, may be broken off and burned, yea, shall be, v. 6. But the branches really implanted can never be taken away. All the strength of men and devils is not able to divide one branch from the vine. Every branch tends to the mystical perfection of the vine; the saints are the *fulness of him that filleth all in all*, Eph. ii. ult.; and he cannot lose one of them without impairing himself. The devil hath been plucking and hewing, but he was never yet able to break off the weakest branch. 6. *Christ is a vine whose fruit feeds the soul.* Other vines only bring forth fruit for the body. The outward man is cheered and nourished by the grape and its juice. But Christ is a vine, whose fruits are for the soul. When the heart is cold by reason of inward fears, this wine warms it; or is heated by violent temptations, this wine will cool it; yea, when the soul is ready to die, this wine will revive it. 7. *Christ is a vine whose fruits never surfeit.* The fruit of all material vines, if taken immoderately, breeds distempers and sicknesses. See *Noah*, Gen. ix. 21. Many bereave themselves of their wits and health, by the excessive use of the fruit of the vine. But the fruits of this mystical vine have no surfeiting quality. A man cannot take too much of them: *Eat, O friends, drink; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved*, Cant. v. 1. The sickness and death of the soul ariseth not from the immoderate using, but from the refusing of its fruits. 8. *A vine that never casts any of its fruits, but brings all to perfection.*

THE USES OF THIS POINT.

I. *This may help us to understand that speech of Christ, This is my body, and my flesh is meat indeed, &c.* Joh. vi. 53, 54, 55. The Papists understand it in a literal sense, as if the bread were changed into the substance of his body, &c. and are angry with the Protestants because they will not believe it. Among many reasons which overthrow that fond interpretation, this and similar figurative speeches may help us to understand. Christ calls himself the light, the door, and here the vine; not as if he were substantially changed into these things, but to shew the spiritual resemblance which is between him and these corporal things. Why should there be any more change of substance, when Christ

saith, *This is my body*, than when he saith, *I am the door, I am the vine*, I cannot see; but God hath upon the blind Papists fulfilled that threatening, 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12. Had not God judicially blinded their hearts, such irrational and antiscriptural opinions would never have been believed.

II. *See the excellency and necessity of Christ.* All these comparisons are to convince our carnal souls of Christ's transcendant excellency. He hath, in a spiritual sense, all the good properties of the vine, and of its fruits. I name four. 1. *Wine nourisheth.* It helps digestion. Christ is a great nourisher; the soul would decay, and dwindle to nothing, if Christ did not continually nourish and feed it. 2. *Wine is a comforter*, Psl. civ. 15. Christ is the great comforter of the soul. When it droops and languisheth, or when it's cast down and dejected, the love and presence of Christ doth cheer it again. See Psl. xxi. 6. Psl. xxiii. 3. : *He restoreth my soul.* Jesus is the soul's restorer. 3. *Wine emboldeneth.* It doth raise the spirits; and, being moderately used, puts courage into the fearful. Christ doth embolden the soul: his presence and grace fills the soul with a holy courage. He that was fearful, dares now speak and act for God: the very tidings of Christ's coming expels fear from the hearts of his people, Isa. xxxv. 3, 4. There is no true valour in the soul till Christ be there. All the soul's confidence is built on Christ alone. We have no boldness in prayer, nor in approaching to God in any ordinance, but what is communicated by, and from Christ, Heb. x. 19. 4. *Wine is healing.* Some kinds are prescribed for healing inward distempers, &c. The Samaritan poured oil and wine, Luk. x. 34. Christ is a great healer; he helps broken hearts, wounded spirits, and all inward distempers whatsoever.

SERMON XV. JOHN 15—5.

“Ye are the Branches.”

I go on to the description of believers in reference to Christ: *Ye are the branches.* The observation will be this, *viz.*

Doct. *That all true believers are spiritual branches*

ingrafted into Christ. He is the royal stock, and all believers are mystical branches of this stock. See Rom. vi. 5. : *If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection, sumphutoi gegonamen.* Christ is there compared to the root, and believers to the branches or scions that grow on this root. *Erasmus* therefore translates it very fitly, *Insititii*, ingrafted or implanted. See this mystery by another similitude, Eph. ii. 20, 21. Christ is compared to the foundation, and believers to stones built upon him. *Ye are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.* There are two ways of being branches of Christ: the one is, *by external profession only.* In this, all who are members of the visible church are branches of Christ. Thus all the Gentiles, when called into the church by the preaching of the Gospel, were grafted into Christ, Rom. xi. 17. : the metaphor is often used in that chapter. This is not that ingrafting which I shall now handle. For though it be an honour and a privilege to be a branch of Christ in this general way, yet it is not saving. A man may be a branch of Christ in this respect, and yet at last be cut off and burned. See v. 6. The other way of being grafted, or made a branch of Christ, is, *by the grace of union.* Thus all true believers, and only true believers, are made branches. This is what the apostle elsewhere calls *being members of Christ*, Eph. v. 30, and *dwelling in Christ*, Joh. vi. 56, and *putting on Christ*, Gal. iii. 27. Which will further appear from the sacraments, both of *baptism* and the *supper*.

1. *Baptism speaks it.* 'Tis the seal and sign of this ingrafting, Rom. vi. 5. *If we have been planted together into the likeness of his death,* How is that? see v. 4. *We are buried with him by baptism unto death.* Also Gal. iii. 27. *As many of you as have been baptised unto Christ, have put on Christ.* Not as if all baptised persons were really made branches, but because this is sealed in baptism as the privilege of all believers. They are as certainly made branches of Christ invisibly and mystically, as all that are baptised, are visibly and externally. 2. *The supper of the Lord doth also speak it.* Our eating and drinking of Christ sacramentally, is a seal and pledge of our being ingrafted into

him spiritually, Joh. vi. 56. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* We are therefore nourished by his flesh and blood, because we are united to his body. In the handling of this doctrine, two things are to be opened by way of explication.

I. *How we are made branches of Christ.*

II. *What benefit we have by being so.* For the first, how men are made branches of Christ. There are three things which concur to the soul's ingrafting into Christ; the word and spirit of God, and justifying faith.

I. *The word of God.* This preached, is the ordinary and common mediate instrument, whereby this great work is wrought; by it is the soul first cut off, from the wild stock of corrupt nature, and planted into the true olive-tree, or vine, Christ. Hence the work of planting, is attributed to the ministers of the gospel, 1 Cor. iii. 6. 7. *I have planted, Apollos watered.* God indeed is the great planter. See 1 v. *I am the true vine, and my father is the husbandman.* He is the master planter, the ministers are subordinate planters; *We are laborers together with God,* 1 Cor. iii. 9.; they are so called, because by the word preached, this great work is done, Isa. lxi 1, 2, 3. *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach &c.* These mystical trees are God's planting; but the instrument is the word preached. Hence the word is called, the incorruptible seed of regeneration, 1 Pet. i. 23. As all the trees and plants in the first creation were set, and sprung up by the word of God, Gen. i. 11, 12. So are all these mystical branches ingrafted by the ministerial word.

II. *The spirit of God.* He is the immediate instrument whereby the soul is ingrafted. It is the spirit which gives efficacy to the word, both to cut off the soul from the stock of nature, and implant it into the stock of grace. The word would never be able to cut off any person from his first root, if it were not edged and strengthened by the spirit. See Luk. xi. 20. compared with Mat. xii. 28. He is called the finger of God, because he is the immediate instrument whereby God works in the hearts of his creatures; particularly to ingraft the soul into Christ, he is the immediate instrument, 1 Cor. 12, 13. *By one spirit are we all baptized into one body, &c. and have been all made to drink into one spirit.* And again, Eph. ii. 21, 22. under another figure *Paul*

saith in Christ we are builded an habitation of God through the spirit. The same spirit which builds us upon Christ into one temple, doth ingraft us into Christ as one vine.

III. *Faith.* This is the immediate instrumental cause on man's part. Faith is an uniting grace, it knits the soul to Christ, and him to the soul. Faith is an incorporating grace, it embodies the soul into Christ, making it one with him. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5. *To whom coming as to a lively stone, &c. Ye also are built up as lively stones, &c.* Two things are observable in that text. (1.) That the Saints are built up together upon Christ the foundation-stone, an holy house to God. (2.) How Christ and they, are cemented together into one building; this is by believing set out by the expression of coming, which is used ordinarily for believing, as Mat. xi. 28. The spirit of God first works faith in the heart of a person through the word, and then the soul is by the spirit, through faith ingrafted into Christ, and made a lively branch. For the second particular; what advantage the soul hath, by being a branch of Christ; I shall here follow the metaphor. Such as branch hath by being ingrafted into the stock, the believer hath in a spiritual sense, by being ingrafted into Christ. I name five.

I. *Spiritual support.* The branch is supported by the stock into which it is ingrafted. The branch doth not bear the vine, nor itself, but is borne by the vine. A believer hath support from Christ. We stand on Christ's legs, not on our own. *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*, Phil. iv. 13. The strength of the branch is in the vine; so is the strength of a believer in Christ. *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved?* Cant. viii. 5. *I laid me down and slept, I awakened, for the Lord sustained me.* Many blasts pass over a believer; many violent concussions and shakings, partly by reason of sin, and partly by temptations from the Devil, and from men; in all these, he hath sustentation from Christ, into whom he is implanted. *My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. A believer may with confidence go to Christ, and pray for support in his weaknesses; yea, may challenge support. Christ would never have made thee a branch, if he had not intended to support and strengthen thee Isa. xli. 10; there are repeated promises of sustentation,

I will strengthen thee, I will help thee, I will uphold thee. In doing, in suffering, in dying, is a believer supported by Christ. A believer never wants support; but when either through pride he will not have it, or through slothfulness he will not seek it from Christ.

II. *Spiritual nourishment.* The branch doth not give nourishment to the stock, nor to itself, but receives it from the stock. A believer hath nourishment from Jesus. The root feeds the branch, and conveys it's sap to each branch, whether great or little; nearer the root, or further from it. Christ conveys proper nourishment to every believer, see Col. ii. 19. The whole body from Christ by joints and bands, hath nourishment ministered; the ordinances are the joints and bands, by which nourishment is carried, but Christ is the great treasury from whence it is carried; he nourishes faith, hope, love, &c. *Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace,* Joh. i. 16. Every grace a believer hath, would die and wither, if it did not receive daily nourishment from Jesus Christ.

III. *Spiritual increase.* The branch receives augmentation from the vine. The graft, when it's first implanted, is very small, a child may break it with one of his fingers; but by abiding in the stock, it grows till it come to perfection. All a believer's increase is from Christ: 'tis by and through him, that we grow from infancy to a perfect man, Col. ii. 19. *In him the whole body having nourishment ministered, increaseth with the increase of God.* Eph. iv. 16. where the apostle tells us, that by and from Christ *the whole body being fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every part supplieth, maketh increase of the body.* That their knowledge is stronger than it was at first; that the habits of grace are strengthened, &c. is by virtue of their implantation into the vine. Christ is the believer's breast, who by sucking at this breast, grows from a child to a young man, from a young man to an old man in Christ.

IV. *Spiritual fructification.* The fruitfulness of the branch is from the fulness of the root. The stock sends out its sap to every branch, and so it buds, blossoms, and brings forth fruit. A believer's spiritual fruitfulness is from Jesus; he sends out his sap and fatness to him, and then he doth, according to his kind, bud, blossom, and bring forth fruits in his season. This follows immediately after the

text. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing.* 'His choris emou, separated from me, ye can do nothing. David, Psl. i. 3. tells us our fruits spring from our implantation. *He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, which bringeth forth his fruit in his season,* so Psl. xcii. 13, 14. *Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, &c.* This pre-eminency mystical trees have over the natural. Old age makes the natural tree barren; but the mystical tree the more fruitful. Consider what God saith to his people, Hos. 84. 8. *From me is thy fruit found.* This the church acknowledgeth, when she calleth them Christ's fruits, Cant. iv. 16.; they are borne by the church, but produced by Christ; they are the church's fruit in regard of benefit, but Christ's in respect of production. The creation, preservation, and ripening of them are from Christ; they are our fruits in regard of inhæsin, but Christ's in respect of procreation. That christian is blinded with ignorance, filled with malice, or swelled with pride, who will not acknowledge his spiritual fructification to be from Christ.

V. *Spiritual fellowship.* The branch, by its ingrafting into the stock, hath fellowship with it, it doth partake of all the good of the stock. A believer, by his implantation into Christ, hath spiritual fellowship with him, in all his good things, *God is faithful, by whom ye are called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ,* 1 Cor. i. 9. He that is a branch of Christ, is spiritually married to Christ, Hos. ii. 19, 20 *I will betroth thee unto me for ever, in righteousness, in judgment, in loving-kindness, in mercies and in faithfulness.* Marriage gives the wife an interest in all the good things of her husband; his honours, his riches, his relations are now related to her; her name is set upon all the goods which are marked with her husband's name; where he is master, she is mistress. By our implantation into Christ, all his possessions are ours; his honours are ours, we are called by his name; he Christ, we christians; his riches are ours, his relations are ours, *I ascend to my father, and your father; to my God, and your God,* Joh. xx. 17. hereby, (1.) We communicate with Christ in his death, Rom. vi. 5. All the fruits of his death are ours, only

by ingrafting into him. (2.) We communicate with Christ, in the fruits of his resurrection, Rom. vi. 5. *We shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection*, (3.) We have communion with him in his life, Rom. vi. 8. *If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him*. He will be for ever unto us a spring of spiritual life. *Because I live, ye shall live also*, Joh. xiv. 19. Herein do these spiritual branches, differ from the natural; a natural branch may die, though the root live; but a spiritual branch of Christ can never die, while there is life in Christ his root. (4.) We participate of the spirit who is ours, because we are branches of Christ, 1 Cor. vi. 17. *He that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit*, consider 1 Cor. i. 30. *Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, &c.* There are three things in this text. (1.) That believers are in Christ. (2.) This is from God's donation, *Of him are ye in Christ*. (3.) That by virtue of their interest in Christ, they have fellowship with Christ; he is to them wisdom, &c. because they are in him: he is their wisdom, as he hath revealed salvation to them, and guides them in the way of salvation: he is their righteousness, as he hath perfectly obeyed the law commanding, and fully satisfied the law condemning: he is sanctification to them, as he hath given them his spirit to renew them by regeneration; and he is their redemption, as he shall raise them up at the last day, and glorify them. Thus much for explication. The uses of this point are (1.) Information. (2.) Exhortation. (3.) Consolation.

I. For information, (1.) *We may learn from this metaphor, the nature of the union between Christ and believers*. The doctrine of our spiritual union with Christ, is a stupendous mystery, therefore the Holy Ghost makes use of natural similitudes, to set it forth. Among others, this of the vine and branches; which teacheth us three properties of this union. (1.) *That it is a real union*. The vine and branches are not united appearingly, but truly. Christ and a believer are united, not imaginarily, but really. though it be invisible to the eye of sense, yet it is visible to the eye of faith: though it be a spiritual, yet it is a true union. Hence it is, that the name of Christ is communicated to all his members, 1 Cor. xii. 12. *so also is Christ*. Not Christ personal, but mystical. If the union were not in reality, Christ would never impart his name to any of them.

(2.) *That it is a very strict union.* The union between the vine and branches. is not a loose, but a close union; by virtue of this, they are made one tree. The union between Christ and a believer, is a very close union; they are not united as a wooden leg to the body, only by external bands and ligaments; but as the natural leg, by inward bands, by those influences of spirits, animal and vital, which descend from the head to the members. The believer is not tied to Christ, only by the band of an outward profession, but made one with Christ by a real incorporation: Christ and he are made one not by mixture, as water and wine; but by marriage, as the husband and wife. Next to the union of the three persons in one nature, and of the two natures of Christ in one person; this spiritual union between Christ and the believer, is the most glorious. (3.)

That it is an union wrought by God, not by us. What doth the branch contribute to its union with the root? Or we, to our union with Christ? We neither cut off ourselves, nor graft in ourselves. Man is passive in his first conversion, Eph. ii. 10. *autou poiema*. This is the first inference.

2. *We may from hence learn the high descent of true believers.* They are of a very eminent extraction; however mean in their natural birth, yet in their spiritual birth, they are nobly descended; they are the off-spring of the great family of Heaven. See (*genos exlection, basileion iereteuma, ethnos agion laos eis peripoiesin*) What heraldry is comparable to this? They are buds of the cæstelial vine, and branches of Christ; by virtue of their union with Christ, they are made one, both with the father and the Holy Ghost, Job. xvii. 21. *That they may be all one with us.* They are of the blood royal of Heaven, and kin to all the persons of the sacred Trinity. 'Tis an honor to which the Angels of Heaven are not advanced. To which of the Angels said Christ at any time, *I am the vine, ye are the branches?* Though they be above us in their nature, yet are we above them in our union. True saints are not contemptible persons; whatever they be as men, yet as new men, they are better descended than the best born of the sons of men.

II. *For exhortation.* I shall direct it first to the branches; secondly, to those who grow upon their first stock.

1. *To the branches of Christ.* I have from this doctrine, five things to commend to them. (1.) *That they would be very*

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thankful for this great privelege. Bless the Lord that he hath made you branches. Ye are not so by your natural, but by your spiritual birth. There is this difference between the natural branch and the mystical: the natural is ordinarily better than the stock into which it is ingrafted; gardeners, if they can but get a good graft, care not how mean the root be. A crab-tree is good enough to graft upon, but here it is quite contrary; the stock is better than the branches. The best of us by nature are wild vines as the gentiles, Rom. xi. 24. We were cut out of the olive-tree, which is wild by nature; the more cause we have to admire the goodness of God, the great husbandman, that such crabbed, sour, knotty, crooked branches as we were by nature, should be implanted into such a sweet, glorious, honorable root as Christ is; *behold here the goodness of God*, Rom. xi. 22. Our visible external implantation is a very great mercy, our spiritual implantation far greater. We were made branches of Christ. When we were very unfit; very unwilling, and when others as good as the best of us, were passed by, and suffered still to grow on the sour stock of nature. Bless God for your rooting in Christ, it is the ground of all other blessings. (2.) *That they would be fruitful.* The scripture calls frequently for plentifulness of fruit from the Saints of God, Phil. i. 11. he would have us filled with the fruits of righteousness; great reason there is why it should be so. We are ingrafted into a fruitful vine; God may well expect we should be fruitful branches, read Ezek. xlvii. 12. *By the river shall grow all trees for meat, &c.*; we should be careful to fulfil this prophecy. God may repent that ever he made us branches of such a stock, if we be not very fruitful branches. We may well question our implantation, if not fruitful. Herein is the excellency of the mystical branches, that they are not any of them barren. A believer's fruitfulness doth greatly honor God, the husbandman, and Christ the vine; but his unfruitfulness dishonors both, Joh. xv. 8. *Herein is my heavenly father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit, &c.* Fruitfulness doth distinguish between the nominal, and the real disciple. He that is a disciple indeed, is a fruitful one; we are therefore made branches, that we may be fruitful. Of all branches, the vine-branch is good for nothing, if it be not fruitful. I beseech you be fruitful. Let the fulness of the root, appear in the fruitfulness of the branches, and be sure that ye bring forth the fruits of the

stock. Here is another difference between the natural branch and the mystical ; the natural brings forth not the fruits of the stock, into which it is ingrafted, but the fruits of its own kind ; but the mystical branch must bring forth the fruits of the root of Christ, his meekness, patience, and heavenly-mindedness, &c. The end of this, and all other privileges, is our fruitfulness, 1 Pet. ii. 9. *Ye are a chosen generation, &c. to what end ? That ye should shew forth the virtues of him that called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* (3.) *That they would be very holy.* Take heed of wickedness, you that are the branches of Christ. Mean and sordid employment is not fit for persons of noble or royal descent. Sin is an unmeet employment for a branch of Christ. *Holiness becometh thy house O Lord for ever,* Psl. xciii. 5. and 1 Cor. vi. 15. *Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot ? God forbid.* For a branch of Christ to lie, cheat, or defraud, how unseemly ! For shame let it not be so *He that is born of God sinneth not,* 1 Joh. iii. 9. *He that abideth in him sinneth not,* v. 6. He sinneth not that unpardonable sin ; he committeth no sin as others do, with delight, with allowance, with deliberation, &c. Either disown sin, or disown to be branches of Christ. When Satan tempts you, or the flesh stirs you up to sin, say to them with resolution of spirit, such dishonorable employment is very unfit for a branch of Christ. Let them that are branches of the Devil, do the Devil's work ; but let the branches of Christ, do the work of Christ. *He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself so to walk, even as he walked,* 1 Joh. ii. 6. (4.) *That they would acknowledge their whole dependance to be on Christ.* The branch depends not on itself, but on the vine. All a Saint's dependance should be on Christ. *On him we depend in point of fruition.* God hath laid up all that ever we shall have in Christ ; all that the branches receive, is from the root ; all a believer shall have, is from Christ, *Out of his fulness have we all received,* Joh. i. 16. *On him we depend in point of action.* As the good we receive is from him, so all the good we do is done by him ; he is the spring of all our good, both in a passive, and active sense, *Without me ye can do nothing,* Joh. xv. 5.. It is very unseemly, and incongruous, for a branch of Christ to deny his dependance on the root, either by word or action. To expect any thing but from and through Christ ; to go about

to do any thing without power derived from Christ, is to deny our dependance on him, and he that denies this, shall have no benefit by him. *Christ in you the hope of glory.* Col. i. 27. He that will either have glory or grace, any other way than through Christ, shall certainly come short of both. He that will undertake to perform any action, or encounter any temptation, without actual rolling himself on Christ, shall find the action too hard, the temptation too strong for him. A christian may do all things when Christ strengthens him, but he can do nothing until Christ enable him. 'Tis a dangerous thing not to depend on Christ. These two inconveniences follow. First, *He that doth not acknowledge his dependance on Christ for what he doth, will not give Christ the glory of what he doth*; and what sacrilege is it to rob Christ of his glory? Secondly, *He that will not acknowledge his dependance on Christ, doth stop up the current of the grace of Christ to himself*. If we withhold our acknowledgments, Christ will withhold his out-flowings. Let this persuade all to own their dependance on Christ. (5.) *Strengthen your union with Christ more and more.* Grow farther and farther into Christ, Eph. iv. 15. A believer, as soon as ever he is implanted, is inseparably united; but yet the union may be strengthened. As the tree shoots up in height, so the root grows downward in depth, and every branch, the longer it grows in the stock, the more firmly is united. A believer must get faster and faster hold on Christ every day: he must strengthen his faith in Christ daily. As our faith, so is our union with Christ strengthened, Col. ii. 6, 7. *As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord; so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith.* As our faith is established, so is our union. Every sermon, or prayer, or sacrament, should cause us to sink deeper and deeper into Christ. 2. *To them that are not branches.* That they would endeavour to be implanted. I know a christian is merely passive in his first conversion; the grace of conversion is preventing grace, yet something may be done. The word of God, is the mediate instrument of our implantation: wait constantly on this word; when ye come to it, lift up your hearts to God, and get others to join with you, that God would cut you off from the stock of the wild vine, and implant you into Christ. Sigh after Christ; when Christ lays hold on you by his spirit to cut

you off, do not resist. Cut yourselves off from sinful acts, and God may cut you off from a sinful root.

III. *For consolation.* This doctrine that we are branches of Christ, affords many branches of comfort. There are four consolations to believers, arising from four privileges, which redound to them from this relation. (1.) *Surely Christ will be very sensible of all the wrongs which are done you.* They come very near to him, that lay violent hands upon his branches. There is sympathy between Christ and believers, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Acts ix. 4. he that hacks and hews the branches, is injurious to the stock; he that hews at a believer, doth hew at Christ the root. (2.) *Surely Christ will receive you under all decayings and dyings.* Believers have their natural winters as well as the natural branches: they lose their verdure and greenness, sometimes through sin, as other trees do. Well, here is your comfort, Christ your stock will send out his sap, and by the communications of his influences, restore you to your lustre and greenness again; he will cause a fresh and beautiful spring, to succeed a drooping winter, and make you fresh and gay after all your spiritual witherings and failings. The root owes this to the branch, to revive it and convey sap to it. Christ having undertaken to be the church's stock, doth communicate sap and moisture to every believer. God hath put fulness into him, that he might send out to all the branches. *David* had once lost his greenness; *Peter* was foully withered; many other Saints have languished, but Christ hath sent out his moisture and revived them again. *He restoreth my soul and leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his names sake,* Psl. xxiii. 3. A branch of Christ may promise to himself, that he shall have spiritual restorings from Christ after spiritual languishings. Christ may for a time let his branches wither, but he will not let them die. (3.) *Surely Christ will bear thee up in all shakings.* Believers meet with many sore tempests in this world, they have storms and earthquakes, fightings without and fears within. Jesus will never suffer you to be broken off by any of these storms. In this, the mystical branches exceed all the natural; they may be broken off from the stock, but those cannot. You have seen sometimes strong arms of mighty trees broken off by strong winds, mighty thunders, &c. but let it lighten and thunder ever so violently, Christ will secure these branches. Once a branch, and ever a branch, *Simon, Simon,*

Satan hath desired to sift thee, &c. Luk. xxii. 32. He that will pluck off a branch, must first pluck up the root. While the stock hath strength to bear the branches, they shall be borne up; only two things the branches must be careful of. *They must importune Christ by their prayers.* They must beg of him what they want, and he will bestow what he hath promised. Jesus cannot deny importunate prayer. *They must clasp about him by faith.* Faith is the soul's mouth that sucks nourishment from Christ. A hand of faith will fetch any thing from him. (4.) *Surely Christ will transplant you to himself in glory.* Christ is a root of glory as well as of grace. We are implanted into Christ in grace for glory. *Hereby we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,* Col. i. 12. He in Christ by grace, shall be with him in glory, Col. iii. 4.

SERMON XVI. LUKE 1—69.

“Hath raised up an horn of salvation.”

THESE words are a part of the holy song of *Zacharias* the father of *John Baptist*, after the use of his speech was restored to him: God was pleased to deprive him of this for a time, that he might correct him for his unbelief, v. 20. the occasion was this, an Angel of the Lord was sent to him, as he was burning incense in the temple, to inform him, that his wife *Elizabeth* should conceive and bear him a son, v. 13. *Zacharias* knowing that both himself and his wife were now so old, that according to the course of nature, they could not expect seed; in an unbelieving manner, desired a sign from the Angel, v. 18. the Angel gives him a sign, which was also a punishment; *Thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak,* v. 20. The child being born, and circumcised on the eighth day, according to the law, God remembers his servant, and opens his mouth, which had now been so long shut, v. 64. His speech being restored, God fills his heart with the spirit of prophecy, by virtue of which, he utters this prediction,

which begins v. 68. and continues to v. 80. This prophecy hath two parts, besides the preface or introduction.

I. That which concerns Christ, v. 68. to v. 76.

II. That which concerns *John*, v. 76. to v. 80.

I. Concerning Christ, there are two things uttered. (1.) He blesses God for the mission of Christ, v. 68. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited his people.* (2.) He shews the benefit the elect have by this sending of Christ. First, *Redemption*. This is amplified by many words which signify one and the same thing. *He hath redeemed his people, he hath raised up an horn of salvation, &c.* Secondly, *Sanctification*. This is set down, v. 74, 75. *That he would grant us, that being delivered, &c. We might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness, &c.*

II Concerning *John* there are likewise two things. (1.) The nature of his office; he should be an extraordinary prophet, v. 76. (2.) The work of this prophet, with his success in it, v. 76, 77. *Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his way, &c.* God that had raised him in an extraordinary manner, would bless him with more than ordinary success. *Many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord his God, v. 16.* The words which I have read, are a part of that prophecy, uttered concerning Christ, They are a glorious title which *Zacharias* gives him before he was born, *A horn of salvation*. From which note.

Doct. *That Christ is an horn of salvation to the elect.* God hath raised him up for this very purpose, to be their horn of salvation. *God hath raised up, (egeire)* he was not yet raised, but the time now drew near, God had promised it. Faith looks on what God hath promised, as a thing already done: and then this phrase (*In the house of his servant David*) is added, to shew the accomplishment of the promise of Christ made to *David*. God had often promised *David*, that he would raise up one out of his loins to sit upon his throne, and that his kingdom in Christ, should be perpetual, Jer. xxiii. 5. xxx. 9. Now at this time the kingdom of *David* was cast down, the sceptre was departed from *Judah*; the promises of God made to *David* seemed to fail; therefore is Christ said here to be raised in the house of *David*, because in Christ, the tabernacle of *David* was raised up, which was fallen, according to that prophecy, Amos ix. 11.; and Christ is called also the

horn of *David*, Psl. cxxxii. 17. because he was raised up to fulfil the promise made to *David*, for the perpetuation of his kingdom; and he is called *the horn of the house of Israel*, Ezek. xxix. 21. 'Tis a prophecy of Christ, as interpreters generally agree. Here note.

I. What salvation is here meant.

II. Why Christ is called an horn of salvation.

III. How he comes to be an horn of salvation to the elect. Christ is salvation, (1.) Privatively. (2.) Positively. He is salvation privatively, in three respects, (1.) In respect of sin. (2.) Of Satan. (3.) Of men.

I. *In respect of sin.* Sin is a thing which much endangers the souls of the elect; 'tis indeed the only great dangerer. Neither the Devil nor men could endanger them, if it were not for sins which betray them into the hands of both. There are three things in sin, from which they need to be saved. (1.) *The guilt of sin.* Guilt is the obligation of the sinner to deserved punishment. This doth every sin expose the sinner unto, Lev. v. 1, 2, 3, 4. Now Christ is salvation in this. He hath taken all their guilt upon himself, and freed them from it, so that though there be upon them simple guilt, yet none that shall ever redound upon the person. Tit. ii. 14, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.* This is what the Angel told *Joseph*, Mat. i. 21. He saves them from their sin, by being made sin for them, 2 Cor. v. 21. From hence is the justification of our persons in God's sight. (2.) *The dominion of sin.* The dominion of sin, is the sovereignty and command which sin exerciseth over all men by nature. Hence they are called *douloi tes amartias*. See Rom. vi. 16, 17. *To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, &c.* Now Christ is a horn of salvation, because he doth by the communication of his spirit, undermine and abolish the lordly dominion of sin; and by the infusion of grace, and the communication of the divine nature, cause sinners to become the servants of righteousness. See Rom. vi. 18. *Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.* This is the work of sanctification, Tit. ii. 14 *Who gave himself for us, that he might purify us unto himself, &c.* Christ takes off the yoke of sin, and

they are called *douloi tes amartias*. See Rom. vi. 16, 17. *To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, &c.* Now Christ is a horn of salvation, because he doth by the communication of his spirit, undermine and abolish the lordly dominion of sin, and by the infusion of grace, and the communication of the divine nature, cause sinners to become the servants of righteousness. Rom. vi. 18. *Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.* This is the work of Sanctification. Tit 2. 14. *Who gave himself for us, that he might purify us unto himself, &c.* Christ takes off the yoke of sin, and puts on the yoke of grace. Rom. viii. 2. *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* (3.) *The condemnation of sin.* The wages of sin is damnation, Rom. vi. ult. Christ is a horn of salvation to his elect from this also; for he hath trod the wine press of his father's anger, and suffered the whole punishment of their sins for them. 1 Pet. ii. 24. *Who his ownself bare our sins in his body, &c.* and Rom. viii. 1. *That there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.*

II. *In respect of Satan.* Satan is a sworn adversary to the elect; he goeth about continually like a roaring lion, seeking how he may devour them, 1 Pet. v. 8. There are three things in which Christ is salvation to them from Satan. (1.) *The dominion of Satan.* The elect are by nature as well as others, the bond-slaves of Satan, Eph. ii. 2. They are his servants by nature; and by their own voluntary sinfulness, they have enslaved themselves to his bondage more. 2 Tim. ii. 26. Now, Christ is salvation to the elect from this estate; he doth at their conversion cut the cords, and unloose the chains, by which the Devil holds them fast in bondage; Luk. xi. 21. By his death he did triumph over him, Col. ii. 15.; and at the moment of our conversion, he doth actually put us into the possession of this victory, Acts xxvi. 18.: he then turns us *from the power of Satan unto God.* (2.) *The temptations of Satan.* Satan as he tempted Christ the head, Mat. iv. 1, 2, 3. so doth he not cease to assault and tempt all his members. The more visible Christ's image is in any person, the more violently doth the Devil assault him, see this fully, Eph. vi. 12. Now in this respect, Christ is salvation to them; he stands by them, that these temptations may not prevail over them;

he interposeth himself between them and the teeth of this roaring lion, that he may not have his will on them, Luk. xxii. 31, 32. (3.) *The accusation of Satan.* The Devil is called *The accuser of the brethren*, Rev. xii. 10. and he is diligent at this work, for he accuseth them day and night before the Lord. There are many imperfections and weaknesses in the children of God, they too often do step aside out of God's way, we have too many sad instances of the truth of this in scripture. The Devil takes occasion from these to accuse us, not only to men, but to God. He that turns every stone to hurry us into sin, doth when he hath overcome us, represent all to God against us in the ugliest shape he can, that he may hinder mercy from us. Yea, he is so malicious, that when he can have nothing visibly to lay to our charge, he will pretend something, as in the case of *Job*, c. i. 9, &c. c. ii. 4, &c. Christ is a horn of salvation in this; he stands continually pleading for us at God's right hand; as soon as Satan puts in a bill, Christ puts in an answer, and so doth nullify all his accusations.

III. *In respect of men.* The Godly are endangered by men, both in their outward and spiritual estate. (1.) *In their outward estate.* Men are incensed against them, and seek their ruin and destruction; because they have so much of Christ's image, they have so much of the world's envy, *Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore doth the world hate you*, Joh. xv. 9. The great ones of this world, rise up often against them, and vex them, &c. Now Christ is salvation to them, in sometimes breaking the horns that devour them, or melting the hearts of their devourers, making their enemies their friends; or removing them from those that would break them, and always delivering them from the evil and hurt of the attempts made against them, turning them to their best good; he makes their vinegar better than their wine, Phil. i. 19. *This shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ.* Christ is a horn even of temporal salvation to the elect; he makes your troubles as good friends as your comforts, and your worst conditions work together for your best good. (2.) *In their spiritual estate.* Christ saves from men in two ways. (1.) *From the corruptions of the world.* Wicked men give wicked examples, and by such examples, others are corrupted. Now albeit the godly are sometimes infected with some particular acts; yet are they

saved from the general corruptions of wicked men, amongst whom they live. Christ keeps them from soiling themselves as others do. See church of *Pergamos*, Rev. ii. 13. and of *Sardis*, Rev. iii. 4. Thus was *Noah* saved in his corrupt age, Gen. vii. 1. (2.) *From the evil counsels of men.* Wicked men are of the same mind with the Devil their Father. They are daily tempting, enticing, alluring and persuading the godly to walk with them, in their ways. *Joseph* was tempted by his mistress, Gen. xxxix. 7. Temptation is put in the catalogue of the sufferings of the old martyrs, Heb. xi. 37. Christ the great counsellor of his church saved all these from yielding to such temptations. Though they were sometimes ensnared, yet they are again brought off from those ensnarements, and Christ gave them power afterward the more to resist and abhor them. Christ is salvation. (1.) In grace. (2.) In glory. Christ is eternal salvation unto the elect. All that salvation before, is in reference to this, which is the upshot of all. He therefore saves them from sin, from the Devil and from men, that he may bring them to this eternal happiness. He is called *eternal life*, 1 Joh. v. 20. *The author of eternal salvation*, Heb. v. 9. *The salvation of Israel*, Psl. liii. 6. *The Captain of our salvation*, Heb. ii. 10. (1.) he merited this salvation for the elect. 'Tis his purchase. (2.) He keeps it for them, and them for it, 1 Joh. v. 11. (3.) He will actually put them into full possession of it, when he returns from Heaven in the end of the world, Joh. xiv. 3. Thus much for the extent of that salvation, of which Christ is said to be an horn; he is the salvation of the elect privatively from all evil, and positively to all good, till he brings them to Heaven, the place of eternal salvation,

1. Why Christ is called *an horn* of salvation. Now, fully to know this, let us consider that this word doth metaphorically denote two things especially. (1.) *Glory and dignity.* See Lam. ii. 3. where the Church complaining of the misery which had befallen her, says *The Lord hath cut off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel*, that is, whatsoever was glorious or excellent in *Israel*, see especially v. 1. *The Lord hath cast down from Heaven unto earth the beauty of Israel, he hath covered the daughter of Sion with a cloud, &c.* And then as follows, *He hath cut off all the horn of Israel.* The glory of God manifested in his appearings, when he brought *Israel* out of

Egypt, is expressed by this metaphor, Hab. iii. 3, 4. *His glory covered the Heavens, &c. His brightness was as the light, he had horns coming out of his hand, &c.* So Psl. xcii. 10. *My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn;* that is, thou shalt increase my glory and dignity. (2.) *Strength and power.* Lam. ii. 17. *He hath set up the horn of thy adversaries,* saith the Church, that is, he hath increased the power and strength of thine adversaries. So when God threatens to weaken the power of *Moab*, he doth it by this metaphor, Jer. xlviii. 25. *The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken.* The breaking of the arm doth fully expound the cutting off of the horn. And when God promiseth to give his people power to subdue their enemies; he saith Mic. iv. 13. *Arise and thresh, &c. for I will make thine horn Iron.* Now then, when Christ is called an horn of salvation, the meaning of the Holy Ghost is,

I. The glory of his salvation. II. The strength of his salvation.

1. *The glory of his salvation.* Christ is a glorious Saviour; and his salvation is a glorious salvation, in three respects. (1) *Consider the person of Christ.* God raised up many horns of salvation for his people, when they were in distress. Neh. ix. 27. *According to thy manifold mercy thou gavest them Saviours which saved them. Gideon, Jephtha and Sampson, &c.* They are called Saviours, because they saved instrumentally the people of God from their enemies. But they were but mean Saviours in respect of Christ, his person far exceeds theirs. They were but men; he God and man in one person. Though his glory was concealed from the eyes of carnal men, yet they who had spiritual eyes beheld it, Joh. i. 14. *We beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* If the person of Christ be compared with other Saviours, it will appear that he is a glorious Saviour. All other horns of salvation were but wooden ones but Christ is a golden horn of salvation. (2.) *Consider the nature of this salvation.* 'Tis spiritual and eternal salvation. All those horns of salvation which were raised up in sundry ages for the defence of the Church, were but horns of outward and of temporary salvation. They saved only the outward man, and that but for a time. The Church was in as much peril after they had wrought salvation for them, as ever they were before. When *Gideon* was dead, the Children of *Israel* fell into as great danger as before. So after the

death of *Jephtha* and of *Sampson*, they were overwhelmed with as great hazards as ever. But Christ is a horn of salvation to their souls, as well as their bodies. He saves them from their spiritual enemies; sin, satan and wrath to come as well as from men. 1 Thes. i. 10. And he saves for ever. The Church never can be, never will be, in that danger again, as they were before this horn of salvation was raised. *He hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified*, Heb. x. 14. (3.) Consider the glorious manner of working this salvation. There are three things in it. *He saved the elect, by his own power.* The power by which all other horns of salvation delivered the Church, was by a power out of themselves; but the power by which Christ saved, and still saves his Church is from himself the divinity empowered the humanity, Ps. xcvi. 1. *His own right hand, and his own holy arm hath gotten him the victory. He saved the elect solely.* Other horns of salvation had the occurrence of many besides themselves, *Gideon, Jephtha, and Sampson, &c.* blew the trumpet and gathered multitudes to assist them in the battles which they fought for the salvation of the Church. All *Israel* came after them: but this horn of salvation wrought the Church's deliverance alone, Isa. lxiii. 3, 5. *I have trodden the wine-press alone, &c.* He had no other horn to help him; he entered the field, and fought the battle alone, and by himself obtained the victory. *He saved the Church by his own death.* Other horns of salvation delivered the Church by the death of the enemy. *Ehud* slew *Eglon*, but he himself did not die, Judges iii. 21, 22. *Gideon* slew *Zebu* and *Zalmunna* the enemies of *Israel*, Judges viii. 21. But he himself was not slain. Whereas this horn of salvation got the victory by dying, his cross was his conquest. *He triumphed over principalities and powers on the cross*, Col. ii. 15. He subdued all the horns of the adversaries by the shedding of his blood. His death is the Church's life, his grave is our victory. All these things fully prove that Christ is a horn of glorious salvation.

II. *The strength of his salvation* Christ is a strong Saviour; the salvation which he works for his people hath strength in it. *He hath raised up a mighty salvation for us*; so some translations render this text. To this agrees that of the prophet, Ps. lxxxix. 19. *I have laid help upon one that is mighty, I have exalted one chosen out of the people.* When God committed our salvation to Christ it was to one

that was mighty. Christ is not a reed but a rock of salvation. A strong redeemer, Jer. l. 34. Consider four things.

(1.) *What strong enemies Christ had to vanquish, to save us.* He had to save us from sin. Now, sin is very strong, it grew fast and deep in the heart, and is interwoven in the very constitution of every man. Christ could not save the elect, if he did not pluck up the very roots of sin; he had to save them from the guilt, the filthiness, and the very being of sin. Had he not been very strong, he could not have subdued such a potent enemy as sin. He had to save them from the Devil. The Devil is called, *The strong man*, yea, *the strong man armed*, Luk. xi. 21. One Devil hath more strength than all the men in th world, and there are many legions of Devils who are in the possession of the elect by nature. The Devils are called principalities and powers, for the greatness of their strength, Eph. vi. 12. if Christ had not been very strong, he could never have routed these mighty spirits.

(2.) *The manner how he was to save us.* He was to bear and undergo the wrath of his Father, for his elect: a heavy burden, which they were not able to bear. The grappling with sin and satan was easy in respect of this, Isa. liii. 5, 6. All the punishment of the sins of men was laid on Christ. *He trod the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*, Rev. xix. 15. There its spoken of him as the executioner of his Father's wrath; but he first trod it as a sufferer, and bore it all alone; yea, which he underwent without sinking and fainting. Had he not been a strong salvation, he had perished under this burden. To bear the wrath of God, is a greater work than the subduing of all the Devil's strength. He could have done this by a word; but to satisfy the justice of his Father, could not be done without his personal suffering.

(3.) *The multitude of the persons he was to save.* Thousands and millions, an innumerable multitude, Rev. vii. 9. all the elect of God, present, past and future. Had he not been a strong Saviour, he could not have saved so many; and what shews his strength more, all these were at first unwilling to be saved by him. The elect, when he comes to regenerate, and to apply the salvation to them, which he hath merited for them, are very unwilling to be saved, they run away from him, and like their condition so well, that they desire not to be removed out of it: they reject Christ, yea, fight against him, and his salvation, until he has

subdued their hearts, and made them willing, by the power of his irresistible grace; and then they willingly and freely adhere to him; *draw us, and we will run after thee.* (4.) *The perfection and fulness of his salvation.* It is a complete salvation, Heb. vii. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost,* or to perfection, which means, 1. To save the whole man. 2. To save from all evil to all good. 3. To save to eternity. Christ perfectly saves in all these respects; he will never leave his elect, till he hath brought them to glory. Christ is called a horn of salvation, because he saves both offensively and defensively; he saves his people, and wounds his enemies. Its a metaphor from horned creatures, which save themselves, and offend their assailant.

III. How Christ comes to be an horn of salvation. This is expressed in this word *egeire*, God hath raised him up. It notes three things. (1.) *God's decree whereby Christ was from eternity designed to this work.* The Scripture tells us that by a solemn decree of all the three persons, the second was designed for this work of salvation; and was set apart by the determinate counsel of God to be the author of salvation unto the Church. Ps. ii. 6, 7. *Yet have I set my King &c. I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee.* (2.) *God's mission of Christ.* As he was before all time appointed for this work; so he was in the fulness of time sent to accomplish it. *In the fulness of time God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law,* Gal. iv. 4, 5. Of this mission the prophet speaks largely, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me &c. He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted &c.* To this belongs that solemn public promulgation of the Father, whereby he proclaimed Christ as his salvation to the world, Mat. iii. 17. *This is my well beloved Son.* (3.) *The act of God in furnishing Christ with such qualifications as might render him fit for such a work.* As he established him by his decree, and by his public mission, sealed him for this work; so he did furnish him with all those qualifications which were necessary to carry it on for the good of his elect. This relates to two things. 1. *The preparing of a body for him.* A human nature was necessary for him, who was to be the salvation of man. Payment must be made to justice, by the same nature that committed the trespass; and as the divine nature alone was not capable of

saving by suffering. God fitted Christ with a body, in which body, by the grace of personal union, the God-head was caused to dwell. See Heb. x. 5. *Sacrifice and meat-offering thou wouldest not have, but a body hast thou fitted me.* 2. *By conferring upon the human nature a fulness of all those spiritual qualifications and endowments necessary to carry on his work.* Strength, wisdom, judgment, mercy, love, patience, and many other graces were needful for this work of salvation; God therefore furnished Christ with all these, Isa. xi. 1, 2, 3. And as he had a variety of all these graces, so did God bestow upon him a fulness of them; not a limited, stinted fulness, as he bestowed upon others; but an unmeasurable redundant fulness, which from him might flow out to all the elect with a fulness of sufficiency, Joh. iii. 34. and Joh. i. 16. The uses of this doctrine. (1.) For information in two things.

1. *The miserable condition of those who are without Christ* Not only Jews, Turks and Pagans, but all unbelievers in the church. Whosoever is without true saving faith, is without Christ. 'Tis faith that makes him actually ours. Faith unites us to Christ, and Christ to us. Their misery is very great who are without Christ, for he is the only horn of salvation 1 Joh. v. 11. *He hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* And *He that hath the Son hath life; but he that hath not the Son hath not life,* v. 12. God himself cannot save him that is without an interest in Christ. He hath set down this way of salvation, and he cannot deny himself. It is a question amongst the school-men, whether God could have saved sinners without Christ's satisfaction; they generally conclude upon good grounds that he might; but now 'tis not so much a question. God hath resolved, that whosoever is saved, shall be saved by Christ, and without mutability, he cannot save men another way. Better never to have seen the light, than to die without an interest in Christ; and he that doth not believe truly in him, hath no saving interest him, Joh. iii. 18. How shall I know whether I do truly believe or no? I shall here to help you, lay down a two-fold note of true faith. 1. *It is a heart purifying grace,* Acts xv. 9. Whosoever hath true faith in Christ, will find his heart purified and cleansed thereby. The efficient cause of his purification of the heart in the Spirit of God, who is called the Spirit of Sanctification, 2 Thess. ii. 13. The meritorious cause is Christ's blood,

1 Joh. i. 7. The instrumental cause is faith. This grace purifies the heart, as an instrument whereby the blood of Christ is conveyed to the soul; and as it uses the promise of cleansing, *I will sprinkle clean water*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Faith applies this promise, and so purifies the heart. If you have not purification of heart, you have not faith; and if you have not faith, you have not Christ as a horn of salvation. Now that heart is purified, that hath these three properties. *If it bewail impurity.* Impurity truly lamented, is in God's account as if removed, Rom. vii. 23, 24. If thy pollution be thy greatest burden, thy heart is purified in God's sight. *If it be cautious of every thing defiling.* A heart that is purified, dares not willingly come near any defilement, it will avoid occasions and temptations of defilement, Job. xxxi. 1. Which is an infallible note of purification. *If it be through inadvertency defiled, it will not be quiet till cleansed.* A purified heart cannot lie in any uncleanness, when God hath once discovered it to him. *David* when he saw his sin, how earnestly did he run to the laver to be washed, Psl. li. 2 to 7. 2. *Saving faith hath very high and precious thoughts of Christ*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. No unbeliever can truly have precious thoughts of Christ; nay, they have low thoughts of him, 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. and Cant. v. 9. Try your faith by this note. Now if Christ be truly precious. *He shall reign over thee.* His precepts will be as precious as his promises; his sovereignty as his sacrifice; his yoke as his merits. The apostle opposeth faith and disobedience, 1 Pet. ii. 7.: where Christ is disobeyed, he is not believed in. *If Christ be truly precious to thee, his dishonors will pierce thy soul.* Dishonors done to his truth, worship and government, will be a greater grief to thy heart, than all the dishonors done unto thyself. *If Christ be truly precious to thee, it will be thy meat and drink to do him any service.* Thou wilt make it thy study to set him up, and to make him great wherever thou comest. *If Christ be precious to thee, all his ordinances will.* Thou wilt have a high esteem for his word, his sacraments, and sabbaths, and that for his sake, who hath instituted them. If it be not thus with thee, thou art an unbeliever; and if an unbeliever, thou hast at present no saving interest in him who is the horn of salvation.

Secondly, *The impossibility of any of the Elect perishing.* Their eternal salvation is a thing of absolute certainty.

They can never perish. They may seem to be lost sometimes in their own apprehension. *I said I am cast out of thy sight*, Jon. ii. 4. He was in his own eyes as if he had been a cast-away ; but 'tis impossible it should be so, because Christ is the horn of their salvation. He that hath wrought their salvation, is able to preserve it for them, and them for it. If Christ be able to save you, ye shall be saved. When you look upon that in yourselves, which may seem to hinder your salvation, look upon that which is in Christ to maintain your salvation. You shall be as certainly saved, as Christ himself is. *Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, &c.* Joh. xvii. 24. Your salvation is now fully accomplished ; and he that was able to accomplish it, is much more able to apply it now it is accomplished ; because, *Christ will not lose the merit of his blood*, nor be deprived of the end of his death ; and he must, if one elect should miss salvation. *Christ did not conquer for, but from the Devil* ; Christ will not be at the charge and cost of redemption, and, when he hath done, suffer Satan to go away with the spoil. *Christ will not impoverish himself to enrich the Devil* ; and he should be, if one of the elect should perish : for every saint helps to make up his mystical fulness, Eph. i. ult. *Christ will not rob his Father to enrich the Devil*. If any saint should perish eternally, God himself would be robbed ; for every saint is his inheritance, Eph. i. 18. *Christ will not suffer the Spirit's Temple to fall into the eternal possession of the Devil*. Saints are such, 1 Cor. vi. 19. *Christ will not empty Heaven to fill Hell*. Every saint helps to fill heaven. *Christ will not bear a name in vain*. He will not mock himself, his Father, nor his people. Now if he should be called an horn of salvation, and not actually save his elect, he would be the greatest mocker in the world.

H. Use. Reprehension. *Those are to be blamed that erect other horns of salvation.* 1. The Papists ; they set up their own works as a horn of salvation ; at least they join works and Christ together, as concauses of salvation : the Scripture lays the whole merit on Christ, they lay a part on works. Greater dishonour than this cannot be done to Christ. If he be of himself sufficient, what needs the addition of other things ? He is sufficient,

Heb. i. 3. and c. vii. 25.; and Gal. v. 4. *As many as seek to be justified by the law are fallen from grace.* How did it fall out with *Israel*, that followed after the law of works? See Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32. Yea, I shall add this: Christ will be a horn of destruction to those who will not make him the sole horn of salvation. 2. Much like to these are many ignorant Protestants, who think to be saved by their duties, prayers, and repentance. Let such consider, that Christ must save them from the guilt of all their duties, as well as from their sins. Our holiest services have a mixture of unholiness in them. *O Lord, wash my tears*, was *Austin's* prayers. And it must be ours. The filth of our holy things must be expiated, 'tis through him that they are accepted. See Exod. xxviii. 36, 37. Our holy services are not accepted, because of any worth in us or them, but because of the engraved plate upon the forehead of Christ.

III. Use. Exhortation. 1. *This should provoke all sinners to close with Christ.* The great work of the ministry is to bring Christ and the soul together. Christian ministers are the friends of the Bridegroom, and its their office to woo sinners to come to him. Here is encouragement enough in this text. He is a horn of salvation, of God's raising; fly to him for salvation; it is to be had only in Christ, Acts iv. 12. Under the law offenders fled to the horns of the altar, 1 Kings ii. 28. He that flies to the horns of this altar shall be safe. Only two things must be observed. (1.) *All sin must be cast away: The wicked man must forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts,* Isa. lv. 7. Christ will not be a horn of salvation to an impenitent sinner. He came not to save men in, but from their sins, Mat. i. 21. (2.) *Christ's own terms must be embraced.* Christ came not to save men upon any terms but his own. Now these are, *A voluntary resignation of ourselves to be at Christ's disposing: To do his will, and submit to his sceptre.* The soul must say, as *Saul* did to Christ, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts ix. 6. That soul who casts away sin by repentance, and surrenders himself to Christ, to be in all things ruled by him, shall, whatever his condition hath been before, find Christ an horn of salvation to him. Do not say, my sins are great, &c. The greatest sin thou didst ever commit, is thy so long standing

out against Christ, Joh. iii. 19. Murder, adultery, &c. are great sins; but the soul's refusal to come to Christ is a greater sin; those are sins only against the law, this is a sin against the gospel, and the remedy; yea, this is a sin that binds and continues the guilt of all thy other sins upon the conscience. He that doth not close with Christ, saith one of these things; either that he hath no need of him, or else that he is not able to save him.

(2.) *This teacheth God's people whither to go, when their salvation is endangered.* Sometimes Satan by hot temptations, and sometimes corruption, by its violent out-breakings, do so exceedingly prevail upon the servants of God, that in their apprehension their salvation is in a great hazard; they fear the crown will be plucked from them, and God lets them come into such jeopardy, that they may exercise all their graces, and thrive the faster. They pray, they watch, yet Satan gets ground; sin overpowereth them, so that they are apt to conclude, that the hope of salvation is gone. In such a case, your only refuge must be to this horn of salvation. *David*, when sin was too hard for him, goes to God, Psl. lxxv. 3. We must fly to this horn, and by his strength defend ourselves, and vanquish our enemies. There are several branches of it to be improved at such a time. His death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, attributes, and promises; these are several little horns growing out of this great one. This horn will give you strength to overcome; will keep what he hath purchased for you. He hath pushed down Satan, sin and the world already; and if they get head again, he can easily subdue them. He is not only the horn, but the Captain of your salvation, Heb. ii. 10 (*ton archegon tes soterias.*) It was his free-will at first to undertake it; but having undertaken it, 'tis his office to perfect it. When salvation is at a hazard, go to him, fight in his name, and he will give you victory.

(3.) *Bless the Father for Jesus Christ.* This song begins with praises. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation.* Never think of an horn of salvation, but have in your hearts and mouths *Benedictus Dominus*. If every thought of heart were a rapture, we could never sufficiently extol the love of God in raising up Christ for us; especially, if Christ be an horn of salvation to us in particular. What storms did Christ go through? what deeps did he wade over, that he might

be to us an horn of salvation? He that is not thankful for Christ, can be truly thankful for nothing. When God gave Christ, he gave all. Naturalists speak much of the Unicorn's horn: Christ is the true Unicorn. (4.) *Do not, O ye servants of God, despondingly fear the attempts of your enemies,* though God's Church be the world's great friend, yet it meeteth with many enemies; many bloody horns are goring at it, to destroy it: look at all ages past, and you will find it. *Pharaoh* was a bloody horn. *Nebuchadnezzar* was a horn. You read of four horns, Zech. i. 18, 19. In the new Testament you read of horns; *Herod* and the heathen Emperors were bloody horns. You read of a little horn, Dan. vii. 8. This is Antichrist. Oppose this horn of salvation, to all these horns of destruction. 1. This is larger than they; they reach to one kingdom, he the world over. 2. This horn is stronger than they. 3. This horn is longer-lived than they, Mic. iv. 12, 13. No horn hath yet been able to stand; none shall, Psl lxxv. 8, 10. That horn of Christ, that with one push, overthrew many legions of Devils, is strong enough to bring down men.

SERMON XVII. PSALM 72—6.

"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass."

THIS *Psalm* was penned by *David*, see v. 20. a little before his death, when he had made his Son *Solomon* King. Upon the occasion of *Adonijah's* rebellion, we read in 1 Kings i. 33, 34, &c. that *Solomon* was by the appointment of *David*, anointed King of *Israel* and *Judah*. *David* having set him in his throne; made this *Psalm*, wherein he doth prophetically foretel, and accordingly prays for the prosperity of him and his kingdom; under which, he doth also prophesy the felicity of Christ's kingdom, of whom *Solomon* was a type. Here are some passages which cannot be properly understood of *Solomon*, or his kingdom, but chiefly of Christ and his; as v. 7, 8, 17, &c. *He shall have dominion, His name shall endure for ever.* Therefore it is to be ex-

pounded of *Solomon* and his kingdom, as typical of Christ, the true *Solomon* and his kingdom. Here are,

(1.) Matter of petition. (2.) Of prophecy. (3.) Of praise.

The text falls under the matter of prophecy. *David* describes by the spirit of prophecy, the kingdom of *Solomon*, but especially that of Christ, which was prefigured by *Solomon's* kingdom. This is described two ways. 1. *By its righteousness*, v. 4. Here are both parts of righteousness. The defending of the good; *He shall judge the poor of thy people, and save the children of the needy*: The punishment of the wicked; *He shall break in pieces the oppressor*. 2. *By its blessed fruits*. These are several, as namely, *The holy fear and reverence of God*, v. 5. *They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations*. *The propagation of his kingdom, by the calling in of the Gentiles*, v. 8, 9, 10, 11. *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, from the river to the world's end*. *The great blessings which should accrue to his subjects, and the great glory of the king*, v. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. *He shall redeem their soul from deceit*, &c. *The great increase and edification of his church*. I name this last, because it is in the text, and v. 7. *He shall come down like rain*, &c. In which we have, First, A prophecy of Christ's communications to his church. *He shall come down*. Secondly, The nature of this communication. *As the rain, as the showers*. *He shall come down (Heb. Yarad.)* There is a fourfold descending of Christ which the Scripture mentions. 1. *His incarnation, the manifestation of himself in the flesh*. 2. *The abasing of himself in condition*. He did not only assume human flesh, but all its natural infirmities; he took upon him the form of a servant, lived in the meanest and lowest condition of the sons of men. 3. *The subjecting of himself to death*. His abiding under the power of the grave for three days and nights. This is the lowest piece of his descension, Eph. iv. 9. *In that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lowest parts of the earth?* These comings down of Christ are included one in another. When he took our nature upon him he did truly descend. Not as if the divine nature came where it was not before, but because God did, in the incarnation of Christ, manifest himself after such a manner as he never had done before; for God cannot

properly be said to ascend or descend, being a most simple and spiritual essence, and not moved from place to place as creatures are; but he is said to ascend or descend in the manifestation of his presence; either by the effects of his presence, or by visible species or shapes, appearing or disappearing. 4. *There is another descension which we shall rather expound this of: the distillations of his grace, and spiritual blessings upon his church.* These indeed are glorious. When Christ lets fall the influences of his grace, then doth he come down in a glorious manner. Every drop of grace is a metaphorical descension. Christ doth spiritually come down, when he lets any spiritual virtue drop down in his ordinances upon the souls of his people. See Isa. lxiv. 1. *Like the rain, (Heb. Kamatar.)* Some think our *English* word comes from this Hebrew word *matar*, because they are so near in sound to one another. Rain is the distillation of a moist cloud, which being dissolved by the heat of the sun, and by its collision with other clouds, sends down its water to the middle region of the air. The reason why it falls down by drops, and not like a torrent, is because the cloud is not dissolved all at once, but by degrees. *Upon the mown grass. Detondere;* the Hebrew word here used, hath a double signification; it signifies a shorn fleece of wool, and a meadow newly mown. This hath occasioned divers readings; some read it *He shall come down like the rain into a fleece of wool.* So the septuagint: they that follow this, make it an allusion unto the dew that fell upon *Gideon's* fleece, Judg. vi. 37, 38, 39. When all the land beside was dry, and again upon the land when the fleece was dry. Others read it according to our translation; he shall come down like the rain *upon the mown grass.* This seems more agreeable to the meaning of the Holy Ghost, especially because the clause following is added by way of explication: as the showers that water the earth. *As the showers. (Heb. Rabibim.)* Rain and showers differ only as less and more; rain signifies smaller showers, and showers signify greater rain, Deut. xxxii. 2. Rain falling in multitude of drops is called a shower. *That water the earth.* The Heb. word *Zurziph*, here translated water, is only used in this place in all the Bible; it signifies to water by dispersion, or by drops. The showers are dispersed in drops all over the face of the earth, in a very regular and artificial way. *God hath divided (saith Job) a water-course for the*

overflowings of waters, Job xxxviii. 25. The rain is spouted from the cloud out by drops after such a manner, that every part hath its share. Doct. *Christ is to his Church as the rain to the mown grass, as the showers of rain that drop down upon the earth.* Christ is the spiritual rain and mystical shower. When God gave Christ out of his bosom, he did then, if ever, rain a golden shower upon the world. The Prophets use this metaphor in their predictions of Christ, Isa. xlv. 8. *Drop down ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness, &c.* Though it be expressly a prediction of that great return of the church from their captivity, yet, as *Calvin* well observes, it relates to the spiritual kingdom of Christ, when all this should be completely fulfilled: the heavens did never drop down salvation, never rained righteousness so abundantly, as when they rained down him who is the Lord of our righteousness. Here I shall open three things.

1. What in Christ may be compared to the rain.
2. Wherein lies the likeness between Christ and rain.
3. Wherein Christ excels all other rain.

First. This metaphor of rain relates to three things of Christ. 1. *To his doctrine.* It is usual in Scripture for doctrines to be compared to the rain. *My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, &c.* Deut. xxxii. 2. Ordinarily, the preaching of the Prophets is called *Dropping*, Ezek. xx. 46. *Drop thy word toward the south, and prophesy, Ezek. xxi. 2. Drop thy word toward the holy places, prophesy against the land of Israel.* I find divers expositors interpreting that text of Christ's doctrine. Saith *Chrysostom*, the coming down of the rain upon the grass, or the fleece of wool, as he renders it, signifies the preaching of Christ in the synagogue. And certainly Christ's doctrine (if ever that of any person) may be well compared to the rain. His doctrine is from above, and it hath all the properties of rain, Isa. lv. 10, 11. 2. *To the spiritual government of his kingdom.* The administration of judgment is many times set out by the descending of the rain. *Job*, speaking of himself as a magistrate, useth this metaphor, c. xxix. 22, 23. *My speech dropped upon them, They waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.* Evil governors are compared to a parching draught, whereby the estates of the subjects are withered ;

they are like those destroying gardeners that pluck up the very roots of the herbs ; but good governors are like gardeners that daily water the flowers, and so cause them to thrive. Christ is such a governor as seeks the wealth of all his subjects ; he drops down rain upon them, whereby they are increased, Hos. vi. 3. *His going forth is prepared as the morning ; he shall come unto us as the rain ; as the latter and former rain unto the earth.* Christ's government tends not to the impoverishing, but the enriching of his subjects. In his days *shall the righteous flourish.* Christ is not a waster, but a waterer of the spiritual estates under the government of his sceptre. *David* compares this sceptre to dew, Psl. cx. 3. 3. *To the influences of his spirit.* These are compared to the rain. The Prophet useth this metaphor to set out the distillations of his spirit upon his Church, Jer. iii. 18. *It shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, &c.* When Christ had communicated his spirit to the Church, see what she saith, Cant. v. 5. *I opened to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock.* Christ there came down as the rain, by the secret virtue of his spirit, and caused many precious drops to fall upon the soul of his Church. *Calvin* expounds this text of the secret distillations of Christ's grace upon his people ; so that, in his doctrine, spiritual government, and influence, he comes down as the rain upon the mown grass, as the showers that water the earth.

Second. Wherein stands the resemblance between Christ and rain. 1. *The rain is the immediate and proper work of God.* See by this a difference put between the true God and idols, Jer. xiv. 22. Man can neither set abroad the vessels of heaven to cause rain, nor stop them when God hath set them abroad. The key of the rain hangs at God's girdle. Man may speak long enough to the clouds before they give a drop of moisture ; but, if God will, they are dissolved. As he brings forth the wine out of his treasures, so he draws the rain out of his cellars. Christ comes down like the rain, as he is the immediate and proper gift of God, which had never fallen from heaven, if God had not of his own accord bestowed it : had all the angels of God been convened in an assembly, how to restore lost man,

they could never have found out this way. It applies to God alone. *My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me*, Joh. vii. 16. His doctrine is from God, Joh. xii. 49. His sceptre is from God, Psl. cx. 2. He is called his King, Psl. ii. 6. He prepared him a body, Heb. x. 5. This rain hath no Father but God alone. 2. *The rain is very useful to the earth.* So is Christ to the church. (1.) *It hath a cooling virtue.* When the air is heated through the sun, the rain refreshes and cools it; we find a great cooling after one night's rain, even in the heat of summer. Christ hath a cooling virtue; when the soul burns with lust, or is scorched with fiery temptations, one shower from him cools it again. He, by the droppings of his doctrine, and the secret distillations of his grace, quencheth the unholy heats of the soul. God complains of his people; that they were as *an oven heated by the baker*, Hos. vii. 4. The best of saints find in themselves such inordinate heats. Sometimes they burn with worldliness, sometimes with envyings, sometimes with passion and distempered anger. *Jonah* had a flame of anger in his soul, when he fell so foul upon God, c. iv. *init.* There's no way to extinguish such burnings, but by the cooling drops of Christ: he sends down a shower upon the heart, and so brings it to his own temper again. How did Christ cool *Paul* when unconverted, Acts ix. 1. 3, 4. (2.) *The rain hath a mollifying nature.* When the earth is like iron, by long droughts or hard frosts, a few good showers supple it, and make it tender, Psl. lxxv. 10. *David*, speaking of the earth, saith, *Thou makest it soft with showers.* Christ hath a softening virtue; sometimes the heart is hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. It is like the frosty earth, no hammers can break it, no judgments can dissolve it; at such a time a few drops from Jesus will soften it. The heart of *Peter* was once grown as hard as a stone; he denies, forswears Christ, and curses himself if ever he knew him, Luk. xxii. 55, 56, &c. No sooner doth Christ open the cloud, and rain upon him, but he melts into tears, v. 61. The heart of the church was once frozen very hard. Christ came and knocked; she slept; he continued knocking, she gave him a scornful answer, Cant. v. 2, 3. No sooner had he let fall some drops of myrrh, but she was softened, v. 4. Before, her bowels were troubled at his knocking; but now, her bowels are more troubled, that she made him knock twice. Christ's

word and his spirit have a softening power and virtue; the unconverted hardness of the heart is mollified by this rain. If Christ would now drop a few drops from heaven, the veriest flint in the congregation would be turned into a fountain of waters. How is the stony heart turned into a heart of flesh, but because these showers fall upon it? One good shower of this rain upon the heart of a *Judas*, would make it like melting wax. (3.) *The rain hath a cleansing virtue.* A good shower makes the very channels clean, store of rain makes the very sinks sweet. You observe the fields have a sweet perfume after rain. Jesus hath a cleansing and sweetening virtue. Those hearts that are as filthy as sinks, after a good shower of this rain, are both clean and fragrant. *Mary Magdalen* was full of devils; yet when this rain fell powerfully upon her, how clean was she. See 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. What a company of filthy creatures are these? Fornicators, idolaters, &c.; yet, v. 11, one good shower washeth them clean. Christ hath a cleansing virtue. Let the soul be ever so leprous or filthy, a few good showers from him will make it clean. The Prophet calls him a *fountain for sin and uncleanness*, Zech. xiii. 1. (4.) *The rain hath a fructifying virtue.* The seed which is sown doth not thrive, the grass in the pastures doth not grow, if God withhold rain. All the labour of the husbandman comes to nothing, if either the former or the latter rain be denied. See Ps. lxxv. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Want of rain brings a famine upon the earth. Those three years of famine, in the days of *David*, were occasioned by want of rain, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. compared with v. 10. The sons of *Saul* were to be hanged, till God by sending rain, did signify that he was appeased. The rain is the very life of the fruits of the earth; the clouds are their sucking bottle; they dwindle if these bottles continue for any space stopped up. See Jer. xiv. 4. 6. There is in Jesus a fructifying virtue. He makes the barren soul bring forth, and be a fruitful mother of children. See v. 16 after the text, Joh. xv. 5. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.* The word of Christ is a fructifying word, and his spirit a fructifying spirit. The church is acquainted with the fructifying virtue of Christ, therefore she goes to him, Cant. iv. 6. If he do not rain, there will be no fruits; but if he drop down his dew, the pastures will be green. All the labour and pains of the spiritual husbandman will come

to nothing, without Christ's rain; only if he pour down showers, let not the *Eunuch* say, *I am a dry tree*. Though your heart be as dry and withered as the rod of *Aaron* was, yet his rain shall make it bud, and blossom, and bring forth almonds. The husbandman useth to say of his corn in a time of long drought, that it is stocked; yet that corn, when the rain comes, will shoot up. Grace is sometimes stocked in the soul; yet if Christ rain plentifully upon it, it will get up and gather strength again. *David's* grace was stocked, when he lay sleeping in his blood and uncleanness for so many months together; yet when God opened this cloud, and poured moisture upon him, he revived. (5.) *The rain hath a recreating virtue*. It causes a gladness and cheerfulness in the hearts of men, and begets a kind of briskness in the sensitive creatures: the birds sing, and beasts of the field rejoice in their kind; yea, there is a kind of joy in the very inanimate creatures. See *Psl. lxxv. 13*. *The pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys are covered over with corn: they shout for joy, they also sing*. When rain comes after a long drought, there is melody made by all creatures in this lower world. Jesus hath a cheering virtue, he fills the soul with joy when he comes down into it; and the heart that was dead, and dull, and heavy, is made pleasant and joyful. See *Isa. ix. 3*. *They joy before thee, according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil*. See also the *Eunuch*: *He went on his way rejoicing*, *Acts viii. 39*. The ground of his rejoicing you see, *v. 32, 33, 35*. *Philip* had acquainted him with Christ; and Christ, upon *Philip's* preaching, had rained down a soaking shower upon his soul, that created a holy gladness in his heart. Christ is the only cheerer of the heart. He can remove spiritual melancholy, take off spiritual heaviness, and put unspeakable joy into the soul. 'Tis true many of the members of Christ want spiritual joy, owing either to the restraining of this rain, or from their not discerning it. Whenever the distressed soul shall come to the feeling of these showers, it will rejoice, and be no more sad. Christ is a cheering doctrine. The whole doctrine is called (*euangelion*) a doctrine of good tidings. All the ordinances of Christ are cheering. *I will make them joyful in my house of prayer*. God hath planted Christ as a root of joy to his people. As he is a plant of salvation, so of consolation; no joy is either real or lasting, which is

not bottomed upon him. That soul that hath received this rain into his heart shall have some joy here, and everlasting, full, satisfying joy in, with, and from Christ above.

Third. *Christ is like the rain, if we consider the manner of its descension.* There is a great similitude in his descension upon the soul, and the descension of the rain upon the earth. (1.) *The rain comes down successively and gradually.* It doth not fall all at once; but now and then a shower, as the earth stands in need of it. God pierces now one cloud, and then another in a pleasant succession; so Christ comes now a little and then a little, as the condition of the soul requires. A drop in one ordinance, and a drop in another. A shower falls in this sermon, and a shower in another, Isa. xxviii. 10. *Precept must be upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.* Now one comforting influence comes down, and then another; now one quickning impulsion, then another; now one promise is rained down, then another. Jesus Christ would have his people in a constant dependance on himself. He would have them wait constantly upon every ordinance. He would not have them surfeit, either upon his doctrines or comforts, therefore he observes a succession in distillations of good things upon them. He would have every doctrine, and comfort, soak into their hearts, Luk ix 44. Christ would have nothing lost, which he is pleased to bestow. He would endear every drop of his grace to his people. The souls of his people are like narrow mouthed vessels, they cannot receive much at once without spilling. We are such bad husbands, that Christ dares not trust us with much at once. For these and such like reasons, doth he cause all he gives to distil in a way of succession; he doth in a way of wisdom, parcel out all the good which he rains down upon the souls of his people. (2.) *The rain comes down irresistably.* When by his word of command, speaks to the cloud to distil its God moisture on the earth, it is not in the power of any in Heaven and earth, to hinder its falling down. As the clouds cannot open their own veins till God give the word, no more can they stanch themselves when he sets them a bleeding. Christ comes down upon the hearts of men with an irresistible power and efficacy; whether we understand it of his doctrine, his sceptre, or the influences of his spirit, he descends with a forcible and mighty power; his word is called

a powerful word, Heb. iv. 11. *The word of the Lord is quick and powerful, (energes.)* His sceptre is called a sceptre of strength, Psl. cx. 2. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Sion.* His spirit is a spirit of might, and its said to work mightily in the hearts of his people, Col. i. 29. Let Pelagians and Arminians talk what their wild fancy dictates, of the resistibility of grace; the Scripture mentions no such thing: the rain will come down whether men will or not, and let the earth be ever so hard, it will soak into it. When Christ by this word and spirit descends, it is with a mighty power, so that the soul is not able to resist it. I shall shew the power of Christ's word, spirit, and sceptre, in three great works. *For conviction.* When Christ comes down with an intention thoroughly to convince the conscience of sin and righteousness; the soul though it may stand out for a time, yet is through the mighty smittings of Christ's word and spirit, so powerfully over-ruled, that it cannot but yield. Acts ix. 6. Christ did with such an invincible evidence come upon his conscience, that though he was in a violent motion carried on in a contrary course, yielded up himself as a prisoner into his hands, with *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* He had no strength to stand out any longer, nay, not so much as to dispute with Christ. See 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. Christ, when he comes down with a purpose to bridle the conscience, deals so effectual, that the proudest sinner is brought upon his knees, and made to pass sentence against himself: yea, with such a mighty power doth he come down upon the soul, that even those who are not savingly brought in, have their mouths stopped, and are unable to say anything for themselves. See Joh. viii. 9. They were so mightily convicted by the word and spirit of Christ, that they were not able to abide in his presence, but shrunk away one by one, as men self-condemned. Thus it was in the word of *Stephen*, Acts vi. 10. Though they would not yield, yet they were so powerfully convinced, that they could not resist the spirit by which he spake. Christ doth so demonstratively smite the conscience, that carnal reasoning hath no door of evasion. Isa. xi. 4. Where speaking of Christ, he saith that *he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.* When Christ sets upon the work of conviction, he comes with so much efficacy, that he smites some to submission, and all to silence. *In conversion.* When Christ

descends upon the soul in conversion, what strength doth he put forth? the strong holds of sin are battered down, every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ is brought into captivity; to the obedience of his sceptre, 2 Cor. x. 4. Devils are cast out of the possession, which they have kept for many years without the least disturbance. Strong lusts are mortified, and the very constitution of the soul is changed. *What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest; thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams? &c.* Psl. cxiv. 5, 6. Spoken of *Israel's* entrance into *Canaan*. The like is done by Christ in the conversion of a sinner; *Jordan* is driven back, the whole course of the soul is altered, the mountains skip like rams. There are many mountains in the soul of a sinner; as pride, unbelief, self-conceitedness, atheism, profaneness, &c. These mountains are plucked up by the roots in a moment, when Christ begins the work of conversion. See the allegory, Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8. *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, &c.* All the wolfish, ravenous and brutish qualities and affections of the soul, are powerfully subdued and brought under by Christ. All that have known a person before, wonder at the great change which is wrought, and he wonders more at himself, than all others can do. Christ put his bridle of power into his lips, and turned the current of his soul he scarce knew how. When Christ came upon the heart of *Elisha*, what a mighty power was put forth, 1 Kings xix. 19, 20, 21. *Elijah* cast his mantle upon him; the spirit of Christ descended in that action, and see how the man was changed; he left the oxen, and ran after *Elijah*, and forsook all his friends to wait upon the prophet. When Christ by his word and spirit, descended upon the heart of the jailor, what a strange work was wrought upon him! Acts xvi. 33. He took the apostles that very same hour and washed their stripes. Had any one that had over-night seen him beating the apostles so cruelly as he did, told him, well, before the morning light, thou shalt wish that all those stripes had been upon thy own body, thou shalt before the sun-rise, wash those bloody stripes with thy tears; would not he have thought him mad? and yet all this came to pass. Jesus comes down with so much power, that though the will would stand out against him, yet it cannot resist. Many a person comes to church perhaps with the intention to laugh at the preacher; Christ pours down a shower upon him, which

hath so much power, that he who came a scorner, departs a mourner. *Zaccheus* was upon the sycamore tree, Christ let a few drops upon him, and he was so powerfully subdued, that he came down speedily at the first call, Luk. xix. 5, 6. *Matthew* sat at the excise-office, gathering tribute; Christ rained down but one shower, and that had so much power, that the man left all and followed him; he would not stay to take one man's money more, he arose from his profitable seat, and runs after Christ, Matt. ix. 9, 10. *Peter* and *Andrew* were busy (as Christ passed by) mending their nets; Christ distilled a few drops upon them in his call, *Follow me and I will make you fishers of men*, and how mightily were they overpowered! they would not stay one tide more; yea, they would not give another stich, but arose and followed him, Mat. iv. 18, 19, 20. *For consolation*. When Christ comes down to comfort a sad heart, he does it with power, Isa. lxvi. 13. *I will comfort you and ye shall be comforted*. The consolations of the word and spirit of Christ, come with such efficacy, that the soul cannot shut them out; the mourning is presently turned into dancing. The consolations of Christ, are called strong consolations, Heb. vi. 18. not only in the matter, but in the reception of them; wherever they come, they come with strength. *Hannah* is in bitterness of spirit for a time; Christ doth but (as she is at prayer) pour down a few fresh drops upon her, and she goes away, and is no more sad, 1 Sam. 1. 18. *Mary Magdalen* stands weeping at the sepulchre full of sorrow, Joh. xx. 11. Jesus doth but open the cloud, and dropt a few drops upon her, and what joy is in her heart? Take the most melancholy and pensive sinner, though he be like *Rachel* that would not be comforted; yet one promise of Christ rained down upon him, and set on by his spirit, will make him lay aside his mourning garments. Though ministers cannot answer the objections of sorrowing christians, Christ can so powerfully, that the soul shall have nothing to answer again.

Fourth. *The rain comes down voluntarily, and undeservedly*. See how the showers fall: *They tarry not for man, nor wait for the sons of men*, Mic. vii. 5. The rain doth not expect any human concurrence or casualty. Though it comes down upon us, yet it descends without us, and for our advantage, without our deserving. The distillation of Christ's comes down undeservedly on our

part. The soul meets with many a shower from Christ, when it deserves no such thing. The good either of Christ's doctrine, or sceptre, or spirit, are not merited by us. Should we have no rain from Christ till we did deserve it, we should suffer an eternal drought. The first grace is preventing. *I am found of them that sought not after me*, Isa. lxxv. 1. And all the after-grace of Christ, is undeserved. We do as little to deserve the influences of Christ, as to deserve the distillations of the clouds. All that Christ does for us is by his own grace, Isa. lxxv. 1. *Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth*, Jam. i. 18. We must say, Grace, grace to all the soul-fattening drops that come from Christ. He forgets that Christ comes down as the rain, that dreams of merit. All the sons of men want Christ, but none deserve Christ.

4. *The rain comes down unexpectedly.* Sometimes when the sky is black with clouds, the wind riseth, and driveth them away, without so much as a drop; at another time, the rain falls plentifully when no shower is expected; so Jesus comes down upon the souls of his people often, when they look for no influences from him, Cant. vi. 11. 12. *I went down into the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded; or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Aminadab.* Here a shower fell upon her head when she did not look for it. The soul sometimes comes to an ordinance full of misgiving thoughts, expecting no good; and before it depart, it's wet from top to toe, with the distillations of Christ's spirit; the church found it so, when she had the least reason that could be, to expect it, Cant. v. 5. She might have expected to have found flames of brimstone in her dealings with Christ, and behold she finds the droppings of sweet smelling myrrh. Sometimes in the night-watches, Christ rains upon the soul, when it never expects any such thing. *David made his bed to swim*, Psl. vi. 6. he could not have watered his couch with his tears, if Christ had not first watered his heart, with his grace. Sometimes the soul comes to the throne of grace, parched with hardness, perhaps as dry as the rock in the wilderness, and Christ suddenly sends down a shower, that it goes savourily weeping from his presence. *Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?* Luk. xxiv. 32.; he did descend suddenly upon them, while they were in conference

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with him. Sometimes a servant of God, takes the book of God into his hand when his soul is dry and withered, and before he hath read half a chapter, he finds the clouds melting, and his soul bedewed with a shower of grace: never did a shower come down so suddenly, as the grace of Christ hath sometimes come down upon the soul.

5. *The rain comes down not for its own benefit, but for the benefit of the earth.* What advantage hath the cloud by all its moisture? it empties itself to enrich the ground; so Christ doth by his word spirit and sceptre, descend for the benefit of men: his doctrine and the influences of grace, are for the enriching of his elect; he came down at first in his incarnation for our sakes, 2 Cor. viii. 9. and all his other descensions are for our good; for the filling of our empty souls, the quickening of our dead souls, and the comforting of our straitened and distressed souls; his preaching, his knocking, his striving, in only and merely for our benefit. *What profit is it to God, that thou art righteousness?* Job. xxii. 3. Christ hath no more advantage by all the drops he sends down upon the soul, than the clouds have for all the showers they let fall upon the earth.

6. *The rain comes down variously, sometimes after a more stormy, and sometimes after a milder weather.* Christ comes down sometimes by promises, comforts and enlargements, in mildness; sometimes he descends in severity, by rebukes, threatenings, &c. The church hath as much need of stormy, as of milder showers, of cold rain, as of warmer drops; Christ's more angry drops are as useful to his people, as his more pleasant ones; his chiding and frowning distillations, make his comforting droppings more sweet, his milder showers comfort us, but his stormy try us more; if he should not rebuke us, as well as comfort us, he would lose us. The great rain of his anger keeps us from straggling, when the small rain of his love occasions us to wander.

7. *The rain comes down plentifully.* Not a drop or two, but whole showers: though it come not down all at once, yet as much comes down as is useful for the earth. Christ comes down plentifully, he doth not scant the soul, nor give one, but many comforts. *Eat O friends, drink abundantly,* Cant. v. 1.; he hath enough to give. The soul wants more than a little. He is not niggardly, but bountifully, therefore he gives plentifully, and then as the rain falls in many places at once, so doth Christ. All the earth

for many miles together, is sometimes rained upon at the same time; the rain waters many fields at once. Jesus comes down abundantly, he can, if he please, water many souls, yea, many congregations at once: so many churches, so many fleeces, so many congregations, so many pastures. Christ can rain upon this congregation, and other congregations at the same time; he, if he please, can send down such a shower, as shall water every congregation, yea, every soul in the world at once. As the drops of a shower cannot be numbered, no more can his drops upon his church. If we receive not plenty from Christ, 'tis because we ask not plenty.

3. I shall shew Christ's excellency above all material rain. 1. *Christ comes down from the highest Heavens.* The rain descends from the visible heavens. Philosophers divide the air into three regions; the highest, the middle, and the lowest. Now they all hold, that the rain descends only from the middle region, there it is generated, and thence descends upon the earth. But Christ comes down from the invisible heavens; there he sits at the right hand of God, Acts v. 31. and from thence doth every drop which distils upon the hearts of men descend, Acts ii. 33. *Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which now ye see and hear.* All the good of his word, sceptre, and spirit, comes down from the Heaven of heavens. You must look above the highest region of the air, yea, above the highest star in the firmament, if you expect any drop from Christ. 2. *The rain that descends upon the earth, doth first ascend from it.* A cloud which is the womb of the rain, is a cold and moist vapour, exhaled by the heat of the sun out of the earth or waters, into the middle region of the air, where it is by the cold condensed, and there hangeth, till by the heat it be dissolved into a shower; so that the showers which drop upon the earth, are first drawn out of it, Psl. cxxxv. 7. but all the drops which distil from Christ, are generated in Heaven; he is not beholding to the earth to furnish him: whatever he distils, either in his word, or by his spirit, is originally in and for himself, *Out of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace,* Joh. i. 16. he doth not exhale vapours from the earth, but sends them down from himself to the earth. All his materials are in and from himself; if he could not rain upon us till we did

furnish him with materials, we should be out of hopes of receiving one drop from him to the day of our death. We can furnish him with materials for fire and brimstone, but the ingredients of his comfortable rain are from himself alone. 3. *The rain is not necessary at all times.* There are seasons when the husbandman craves no rain; he is sometimes afraid of showers, and wishes for sun-shine rather than rain. *As snow in summer and rain in harvest, so honor is not seemly for a fool*, Prov. xxvi. 1. But Christ is never unnecessary. This rain can never fall unseasonably. There is no time but the drops of Christ's doctrine come welcome, no moment wherein the influences of Christ's spirit are not grateful to the soul. That day which is not a rainy, is a mournful day. The earth may be too full of rain, but the soul can never be too full of this heavenly moisture. *Si dixisti sufficit, periisti.* 4. *The rain is sometimes hurtful to the earth.* Immoderate rain is as prejudicial as immoderate drought. *A poor man that oppresseth the poor, is like a sweeping rain that leaveth no food*, Prov. xxviii. 3. As parching heat doth sometimes dry up the fruits of the earth, so excessive rain doth often drown them. Sometimes men and cattle are drowned, and houses with their inhabitants are swept away by the overflowing showers. But Christ is never prejudicial to the soul: if ever this rain do any annoyance to men, it is by accident, because it is not received or improved. The distillation of his doctrine is sometimes the savour of death, 2 Cor. ii. 15.; but this is only because men are not bettered by it. The sceptre of Christ doth break many in pieces, Psl. ii. 9.; but this is because men do not submit to it. The influences and strivings of Christ by his spirit, are sometimes the occasion of hardening men's hearts, and so consequently of their destruction; but this is because they do resist and oppose them. This rain hath intrinsically no hurtful destructive property in it. If it ever prove destructive, it is because of some evil quality in them upon whom it falls. 5. *The rain is no distinguishing argument between good and bad.* It falls promiscuously upon the righteous and unrighteous, Mat. v. 45. It indeed sometimes falls in one place, when it doth not on another, Amos iv. 7.; but on whatsoever city or village it falls, it comes down equally on all: as fat drops fall upon the sluggard's field, as upon the field of the most diligent. But

this spiritual rain is more distinguishing. Though all, where the gospel is preached, have the same common doctrine, and some common influences of Christ's spirit, yet there are special drops distilled for the elect, which others never partake of. Some are hardened, others are softened; some are rained upon to conversion, others for obduration; some are melted and dissolved, others are stiffened and enraged. The peculiar drops of special grace are not communicated to all alike from Jesus. Arminians may talk of universal grace, that Christ doth no more for *Peter* than for *Judas*; but the Scripture speaks of peculiar grace which is not communicated to all. *Why is it that thou wilt reveal thyself to us, and not unto all the world?* Joh. xiv. 22. There is hidden manna which Christ never intended to bestow on all; secret drops which he lets fall on one soul in a congregation, and doth not distil upon others. This rain falls with a most exact distinction. *He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*, Rom. ix. 18. Christ hath excluded some from the benefit of his prayers, Joh. xvii. 19. And they that are shut out of his prayers, are excluded from the saving merit of his blood. His propitiation is not extended further than his mediation; 1 Joh. ii. 1, 2. The peculiarity of this rain's descending, is clearly shewed by our Saviour, in the answer he gives to that question of his disciples about his parables, Mat. xiii. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Though the rain of Christ's doctrine fall down indifferently upon all, yet the special grace of understanding, applying, and improving that doctrine, is not given unto all. 6. *The rain can make nothing spring where nothing hath rooted*; it makes both grass and corn, and other plants grow up; but if either the earth be barren, or there be no foundation of roots, the showers can do nothing; can make nothing grow up out of rocks, nor wheat grow where none was sown. But Christ doth not only make seed grow where it is sown, but where none is sown. He, by the drops of his doctrine, and the influences of his spirit, makes the rocks bring forth fruit; not only causes plants to spring in good soil, but, by the dropping of his grace, turns a barren into a fruitful soil: one good shower from Christ will make the barren heath as good ground as the fruitful valley. His word is called seed, 1 Pet. i. 23.; it not only makes seed grow, but it is seed

itself; he, by raining down, turns the thorn-tree into an apple-tree, the thistle into wheat. Other rain brings up something where something is; but this rain brings up something where nothing is. Other showers bring forth figs from fig-trees, but these figs from thistles. Other rain brings up a crop where a crop was sown, but this where none was sown. Those three thousand, Acts ii. 37, had not one root in them when *Peter* began to preach; but before he had done raining on them, their hearts were a nursery of all living plants.

The Uses of this Point. 1. *How justly may Christ expect fruitfulness from his people.* My beloved had a vineyard planted in a very fruitful hill. And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones, &c. and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, Isa. v. 1, 2, 3. It is but equal, that they who live under Christ's doctrine, sceptre, and spiritual influences, should bring forth good, and plenty of fruit; the people of God are compared to a tree planted by the rivers of water which bringeth forth his fruit in his season, Psl. i. 3. Christ is spiritual rain; he is both cleansing and fattening rain. They that live under such droppings, will be one day found inexcusable, if they be not very fruitful: those pastures that are manured every year, if they have seasonable sun-shine and showers, are laid open to the wild champaign, if not fruitful. Remember, seriously, Heb. vi. 7, 8. No argument can be used to plead for those that live under these fat showers without abundance of fruit. 2. *Behold the necessity of Christ.* Is not rain necessary for the ground? are not seasonable showers necessary for the fields and pastures? can any plants live long, if not watered? No more can the soul live without continual supply from Christ. The doctrine of Christ is not unnecessary, his sceptre is not useless, his spirit's influences are not in vain. Christ in all these respects is as necessary to the soul, as the rain and dew are to the earth. He is either blind, or proud, that doth not see an absolute necessity of Christ. *Egypt* is fruitful, though it have no rain; the yearly overflowings of the river Nile is instead of showers; Christ is as the river Nile to our *Egypt*: did not he by the overflowing streams of his grace water our hearts, they would neither bud nor blossom, nor bring forth. He alone is both the husbandman that plants our fruits, the soil that bears, and the rain that waters them. Never think of the need

the earth hath of the rain, but meditate upon the need your souls have of the droppings of Christ. 3. *How blind are they who are offended at the doctrine of Christ!* When he was on earth, many were scandalized at his doctrine; and there are many still, even amongst christians, that are offended at it. He is to this day *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, to them that stumble at his word*, Rom. ix. 33. Men find out many ways of stumbling at the doctrine of Christ. *Some are offended at the strictness of his doctrine.* Christ by his doctrine doth condemn, not only the outward acts, but the inward motions of sin in the heart, Mat. v. 28. He commands the plucking out of the right eye, &c. Hard words of a hard master, have some said of these precepts, which are indeed the commendation of Christ's doctrine. *Some are offended at its simplicity.* Thus were the wise Greeks offended at him, 1 Cor. i. 17, 18. They were of opinion that *Tully and Demosthenes* did far excel the doctrine of Christ for eloquence. *Others are offended at its spirituality.* They think his doctrine is too mystical and sublime. See Joh. vi. 51, 52. 60, 61. They thought it was a strange kind of doctrine, that Christ should give them his flesh to eat. *Others are offended at the divisions which follow it.* Though the doctrine of Christ be full of peace, yet accidentally meeting with the corruptions of wicked hearts, its an occasion of division, Luk. xii. 49. *I am come to send fire on the earth*; and Mat. x. 34, 35. *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I am not come to send peace, but a sword, &c.* These accidental divisions which follow it, cause many to be offended at him; and if any can receive his doctrine, yet they are offended at his government. This is a general offence, Psl. ii. 2, 3. *Let us break their bonds asunder, &c.* His sceptre is too strict, too severe, &c. Let all that are offended with Christ any way, know that they are groundless offences. They are offences taken, not given. For Christ comes down, not as poison to destroy, but as the rain to preserve and nourish men. Take heed, therefore, of being offended at Christ; remember, he *came* down, both in his doctrine and government, not for the ruin, but the salvation of men. He hath all the good properties of the rain, but none of its bad ones. Who-soever is offended at him, is offended at his own mercy.

4. *Lay your hearts open to receive the distillations of Christ.*

When any of this rain descends, let the vessels of your souls be set wide open to receive it. When Christ drops in his doctrine, or distils upon you, by his spirit, let your hearts be in readiness to drink it in. The rain doth no good unless taken in. All the drops of Christ will do you no good, if you do not take them in. When men are besieged in a City and want water, they set out all their vessels when a shower comes, that no drop may be lost. God's children are in this world, as in a besieged City; you want rain, O let not one drop of Christ fall besides you; open your mouths wide, that you may take down all his pleasant drops. Two things are necessary for those that would have this rain. First, *They must get under the cloud.* The public ministry, by which the rain droppeth, Isa. v. 6. Abide where you see these clouds gathering thickest; and when Christ drops down through these clouds, be sure your vessels be set out uncovered to receive whatever falls. *What a miserable condition is it to be without Christ!* It's made the top of all misery, Eph. ii. 12. He that is without Christ, is as parched land without rain. The Scripture threatens withholding of rain as a sore judgment, Amos iv. 7. *I have withholden rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest.* 'Tis threatened as a judgment against them that came not up to keep the feast of Tabernacles, that *on them there shall be no rain*, Zech. xiv. 17. If it be so sore a judgment to want the natural, what is it to want this spiritual rain? Pity such as want Christ, more than you pity those that want other rain. *Whenever you see a shower fall upon the earth, meditate on Christ.* For this reason doth he compare himself to all these things, that we might have remembrancers every where to put us in mind of him. Let every drop of rain be a natural preacher, to put some serious thought of Christ into your hearts.

SERMON XVIII. 1 PET. 2—6.

"Behold, I lay in Sion, a chief corner-stone, elect and precious."

THE Apostle, in v. 2 of this chapter, doth earnestly entreat the scattered Jews, to whom he writes this Epistle, that

they would as new-born babes receive the sincere milk of the Gospel. He presseth this by many arguments ; as God had appointed this to be the soul's nourishment, The mother's milk is not more nourishing to the new-born infant, than the doctrine of the Gospel to regenerated souls. God had sanctified these to be the means of their spiritual growth. As the child grows by the milk of the breast, so Christians grow by the doctrine of the Gospel. The doctrine of the Gospel contains in it the sweetness of the love of God and of Christ towards them that believe. He that hath tasted of this sweetness cannot but thirst after it. By receiving into their heart this doctrine, they should have the closer communion with Jesus. *To whom coming as to a living stone, ye as lively stones are built up, &c.* This he confirms by an argument taken out of the Old Testament, which is here cited and improved to illustrate the thing in hand. See text : *Wherefore it is contained in the Scripture ; Behold, I lay in Sion, &c.*

Here are two parts. 1. The title given to Christ : *A chief corner-stone.* 2. Its explication : *Elect, precious.*

I shall first begin with the denomination, *A chief corner-stone.* The sum is this. The church of God is here compared to a spiritual edifice, or building ; every true believer, is compared to a mystical stone in this building ; and Christ to the corner stone. The note from this first particular will be this. Doct. *That the Lord Jesus is the chief corner-stone of the spiritual structure of God's church.* Both Prophets, and Apostles, and Christ himself, give ample testimony to this truth. 1. The prophets which were before Christ bore witness to this, Isa. xxviii. 16 From this testimony my text is borrowed, *Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation.* and David, Psl. cxviii. 22. speaking of Christ, said *The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner.* 2. The Apostles which succeeded Christ, concur with the Prophets. See that famous testimony, Acts iv. 10. 11. *Be it known to all men, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner.* Hear also the testimony of Paul, Eph. ii. 20. *Ye are built upon the foundation of the Prophets and*

Apostles, Jesus Christ himself, being the chief corner-stone.
 3. We may add to these the testimony of Christ himself, Mat. xxi. 42. Mar. xii. 10. Luk. xx. 17. *Jesus said unto them, did you never read in the Scriptures, the stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner? In the mouth of all these witnesses, is this truth fully established. Two things I shall here open.*

1. In what respects Christ is compared to the corner-stone

2. How he excels all other corner-stones. For the first, Christ is called the corner-stone in four respects.

1. *In sustentation.* The corner-stone upholds the whole building; if it fall, the whole structure comes to the ground. The Holy Ghost speaking of the slaughter of *Job's* children, saith, *There came a wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead,* Job. i. 19. Some stones may drop out of the middle of the building, and yet the building may stand; but if the corners or foundation shrink, the whole fabric is dissolved. Christ is the sustainer and upholder of his church; therefore he is called the *foundation*, as well as the *corner-stone*, Isa. xxviii. 16. He is the great pillar, that bears up his elect: the church's peace, grace, comfort and salvation, are all upheld and maintained by him. *Solomon* reared up two pillars of brass in the porch of the temple, the one he called *Jachin*, that is, *he shall establish*; the other *Boaz*, that is, *strength*, 1 Kings vii. 21. These two pillars did typify the invincible stability and strength of the church, whereof the temple was a sign and figure; and Christ is to his church, both *Jachin* and *Boaz*; the establishment and strength of his elect, that golden pillar that bears up all. The poets have a fictitious conceit of *Atlas*, a great astronomer, that he bears up the Heaven upon his shoulders; that's but a fable, the great body of the Heaven is a burden insupportable to any creature; but Christ is really the great *Atlas*, that bears the whole burden of the church with all its concerns upon his shoulders. *Eliakim* was a type of Christ, the Prophet saith of him, Isa. xxii. 21, to 24. *That he shall be fastened as a nail in a sure place, and he shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house; and they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from vessels of cups to all vessels of flagons.* That which is here promised

to him, is attributed to Christ. *These things saith he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and he that shutteth and no man openeth*, Rev. iii. 7. *He is that golden nail, upon whom all the concerns of the Church both small and great depend*. From vessels of cups, to vessels of flagons, all hang upon him. The Prophet *Isaiah* foretelling his birth, attributes this to him, c. ix. 6. when he saith *the government shall be upon his shoulder*. God hath devolved the whole weight and care of his church upon him, and upon him must we roll it.

2. *In regard of union*. The corner-stone is that medium by which the walls of the house are united into one building; pull them out, and the two sides of the house are separated. Now, Christ is he alone that doth unite the several stones of the spiritual building one to another. This may be considered two ways. (1.) *In the union of Jews and Gentiles*. Before Christ, these were separated, from the return of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*, which place was assigned them by lot, as we read in the book of *Joshua*. Then were the Jews in a more conspicuous manner formed into one polity, or common-wealth; what made this separation, was the ceremonial worship which God established in that church or nation, according to which they, and their posterity were to worship God. This separation continued until the death and resurrection of Christ; but now Christ hath as a corner-stone, made a firm union between these two, so that the Jew and Gentile are brought together under the same worship. This is done by the abolition of the ceremonial law. Christ hath taken down this wall of separation, and so made both one church, see Eph. ii. 13, to 16. *He is our peace who hath made both one, and broken down the middle wall of partition between us, &c.* The Jew and Gentile are now made one house by the death of Christ. (2.) *In the spiritual union of believers one with another*. We read often of communion between them, Phil. ii. 1. speaks of *the fellowship of the spirit*, and Phil. i. 5. of *their fellowship in the Gospel*, and 1 Joh. i. 7. *If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another*. This spiritual communion, or fellowship doth consist. First, *In mutual affection one to another*. One Saint loves another, though they have never seen the faces one of another. Secondly, *In participation of the same graces and privileges*. They are all alike, and partake

of the same gifts, and graces; the same reconciliation, adoption, sanctification and salvation, that belongs to one, belongs to them all. Eph. iv. 4, 5, 6. From hence it is that, the Scripture calls the salvation of the elect, *common salvation*, Jude iii. because it's common to all the elect. The same graces are wrought in all, though different in degrees. Thirdly, *In the performing of mutual offices one to another.* They pray one for another, they give thanks for the good of one another, they grieve for one anothers evils, they bear one anothers burthens, they rejoice in one anothers comforts, they supply one anothers wants, both outward and inward, as far as they are able, 1 Cor. xii. 26. Now, it is in and through Christ, that union and communion of Saints one with another is made. Our communion with him, is the foundation of our mutual communion with his people, Joh. xvii. 23. *I in them and thou in me, that they be made perfect in one.* 'Tis this uniting corner-stone, that brings every particular stone to the building into one. Our mutual union one with another, is in him who is the head of the union, Eph. i. 10. *That he might gather together in him all things, both which are in Heaven, and which are in earth.* The Greek word is very significant, (*anakephalaaiosasthai*,) *to gather to a head.* All the Saints of God that are, were, or shall be; both those that are gloriously triumphing in Heaven, and those that are yet militant upon earth, are gathered together to a head in Jesus. Membership with him, is the foundation of mutual membership with one another.

3. *In regard of direction.* The corner-stone is that which gives the builders direction, how to lay and place all the other stones. If the several stones of the wall, be not laid level to the corner-stone, the whole building is spoiled. He that would build right, must have his eye to the corner-stone. Christ is a believer's direction and rule in all spiritual things, that which is not done by his command, or example, or by some direction from him, is not well done. *Learn of me, for I am lowly and meek-hearted, and ye shall find rest to your souls*, Mat. xi. 29. Christ is the believer's pattern; his word and his example, we must have an eye continually upon, if we would not miscarry. *He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought so to walk as he walked*, 1 Joh. ii. 6. Lay all things level to Christ, and then act vigorously. *I have given you an example, that ye*

should do as I have done to you, Joh. xiii. 5. Nothing will either be lasting or comfortable, which doth not run parallel with the line of Christ.

IV. *In regard of beauty.* Skilful builders place the strongest stones in the corner, because of bearing; and the fairest because of beauty. If the corner-stones be graceful, the whole building is more comely, Psl. cxliv. 12.; more art is bestowed on this, than on any other part of the building. Christ is the beauty of the spiritual building. If this one stone were taken away, the whole would be an uncomely heap. One Christ hath more beauty in him, than ten thousand Saints, Psl. xlv. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men.* The fairest Saint is but an Ethiopian, if compared with Christ: he is, in respect of his beauty, compared to the lily and the rose, which are the most beautiful of all flowers, Cant. ii. 1. The blind world looked upon him as deformed. Isa. liii. 2. There is no form or comeliness in him, but those that know him, admire his beauty. Look upon him in his divine nature, and so, he is more beautiful than the sun. Look upon him as man, and so, he is exceedingly beautiful. No doubt but his body, for the outward feature of it was very comely. 'Tis a rule which divines have; that which God doth *immediately*, he doth most *exactly*; and for his soul, that had more grace in it, than all the sons of men together; his soul was unsoiled by sin, and richly furnished with all grace. God shewed more of his art and skill in him, than upon all the stones of the building besides. The beautiful Angels are black, if compared with Christ. This is the first particular.

II. Christ differs from all other corner-stones.

I. *He is a living-stone.* The corner-stones of all material buildings are inanimate; but (1 Pet, ii. 4.) *He hath life in himself*, and he communicates life unto the whole building. From him all the stones of the spiritual house are called *lively-stones*, v. 5.

II. *He is a stone of God's immediate laying.* God himself did both polish and place it. Other corner-stones are fashioned and laid by men, but this by God himself. *Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone*, he is therefore called, Dan. ii. 34. *A stone cut out of the mountain without hands*; that is, without the hands of men. There was no human help to polish this stone.

III. *He is a corner-stone that can never drop out of the building.* Others will in time loosen and fall: the corner-stones of the Temple did at last fall, but this can neither fall, nor be weakened. Christ sticks as fast now, as he did the first day he was placed.

IV. *He receives no strength from the other stones.* All material corner-stones, as they strengthen the building, so they receive strength from it. The other stones are some defence to the corner-stone; but Christ receives no strengthening from any stone of the building: what need hath he of support? If he had, what can weak Saints do to support him? They help to strengthen one another, but contribute no strengthening at all to him.

V. *Christ is a corner-stone that reacheth from the bottom to the top.* In other buildings, there are many corner-stones, because no one is large enough to serve for all; but Christ is so large, that there is no need of any other. The building is carrying on every day, and will be, till the number of the elect be brought in: but let it rise ever so high, there will not need one corner-stone more. If there were but one corner-stone in other buildings, the whole structure would be spoiled. This spiritual structure would be spoiled, if there should be one corner-stone more. One Christ supplies the need of the whole Church.

SERMON XIX. 1 PET. 2—6.

"A chief corner-stone, elect precious."

I PROCEED to the application, which is for Information, Exhortation, and Consolation.

I. For information: it teacheth seven lessons. (1.) *The perpetuity of the Church.* This is a stable building; it may shake, and totter, and be ready to fall, but cannot utterly fall: it may err both in doctrine and manners, for the best of men are but enlightened and nsacrificed in part, there is a remainder of blindness and

ignorance in their mind, and of rebellion and stubbornness in their wills and affections. The church of *Ephesus* is charged by our Saviour, that she had *left her first love*, Rev. ii. 4. *The Church of Galatia* is said to be *removed to another Gospel*; and that which befalls one or two churches, may befall an hundred. Our divines prove against the Papists, that general councils have erred. The church of God may sometimes be hid under persecution, it may want the public preaching of the word, with the public administration of the sacraments. Our divines prove against the Papists, that the church of God is not always so apparently visible as they would have it. In the days of *Elijah*, the church was under a great eclipse. 1 Kings xix. 10. *The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, &c.*; it was very low, when so intelligent a prophet could not find one besides himself that clave to God, but what answer doth God give him? v. 1. *Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.* Hear what *Azariah* saith to King *Asa*, 2 Chron. xv. 3. *For a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching Priest, and without law.* As the sun and moon do not always visibly shine out to the world, but sometimes suffer an eclipse, so doth the church of God; yet nevertheless it can never be utterly exterminated. If we consider the *nature of the thing*, the church may be abolished, and cease to have a being in the earth; but if we consider the *decree of God*, it can never cease. God ever had since the promise made to *Adam* in Paradise, and he ever will have a church in the earth, till all the members thereof be made triumphant in Heaven. *The gates of Hell shall never prevail against it*, Mat. xvi. 18. It may be brought low but cannot be thrown down. These material fabrics, where the church of God meet for holy worship, may through the fury and covetousness of men be destroyed, that one stone shall not be left upon another, see Psl. lxxiv. 7, 8. yet the church was not destroyed, though the Temple and Synagogues were: this spiritual building of the church shall stand, though all other structures fall: the great reason is, because Christ is the foundation and corner stone. Other buildings may fall though the foundation stand, but this building cannot fall, unless the foundation be destroyed. (2.) *That the Church of God is a very*

glorious building. Amongst many other titles, it's called a *glorious church*, Eph. v. 27. It shall be glorious when it comes to Heaven, of which that text is properly to be understood ; and it is glorious even on earth. *I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon*, Cant. i. 5. *A glorious and high throne, from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary*, Jer. xvii. 12. All the edifices and palaces on earth, are but ugly cottages, if compared with this spiritual building. The temple of Solomon was the most excellent fabric, that ever the earth carried ; *It's called a glorious and beautiful house*, Isa. lxiv. 11. and yet that was but a type of this building ; see how it is described in Rev, xxi. 10, 11. It must needs be glorious, because all the stones are *living stones*. Every stone hath the glory of God on it, and then what makes it beautiful indeed, Christ himself is the corner-stone. How glorious must that building be, where Christ himself lies as the foundation-stone ! To be the least stone in this building, is far better than to be the greatest pillar of any material building. (3.) *The believers union with Christ.* The Scripture frequently tells us the mystery of the spiritual union of Christ and believers. They are not only one by participation of gifts and graces, but one in will and affection, as the members of the primitive church were, Acts iv. 32. yea, there is a real spiritual union between them. *I in them and thou in me*, Joh xvii. 23. This privilege is proved, as by other express Scriptures, so by this metaphor ; as the corner-stone, and the super-structories are united into one building ; so Christ the corner-stone, and all the living ones, built upon him, are made one mystical house, Eph. ii. 20. 21. Christ and believers are one holy temple ; only there is this difference between that union, which is with Christ the corner-stone, and the living stones, and the corner-stone and super-structory stones of material building ; that every believer is as nearly united to Christ as any one. In other buildings, some stones are more nearly united to the foundation than others are ; but here every believer is equally united to Christ the corner-stone. (4.) *The horrible pride of the Papists.* They are so intolerably proud, as to apply this title to the Pope, making him the corner-stone of the church. They apply Isa. xxviii. 16. to the person of the Pope, as if he were the foundation of the

universal visible church. They say that the Pope is in the church as the sun in the firmament, and that the ruining of the Pope, would be the ruining of the whole church. The Scripture teaches us a better foundation. Both prophets and apostles were ignorant of this Romish foundation; they built not on the Pope, but on Christ, Eph. ii. 20. The Pope is the corner-stone of the *Apos-tatical*, not of the *Apostolical* church. The foundation stone of the *adulterate*, not of the *chaste* church; of the *synagogue of Satan*, not of the *spouse of Christ*. The church would be sure to fall, if it had so weak and so wicked a foundation as that *man of sin* is. Christ did not say, Upon thee, *Peter*, but *upon this rock will I build my church*, Mat. xvi. 18. *Peter*, whose successor the Pope boasts himself to be, did publicly preach Christ, not himself, the corner stone, Acts iv. 11. It is no honour, but a great disgrace, to be a stone of that building whose foundation stone is the son of perdition.

(5.) *Behold the truth of the two natures of Christ*. The Scriptures teach that Christ is both God and man. Both these natures are asserted in this text. The Divinity is confirmed from *He that believeth on him shall not be con-founded*. If Christ were not God, it were idolatry to believe on him. No mere creature is without sin, nor to be relied upon without sin. And then the truth of his humanity appears, that he is the corner stone of the spiritual building. Now he could not be a part of the spiritual house, if he were not of the same nature with the other stones of the building: so often as you read faith in Christ required, believe his God-head; and as often as ye hear him called the corner stone of the church, believe the truth of his manhood.

(6.) *The greatness of Christ's strength*. Scripture attributes almighty power to Christ as well as to the Father. His name *shall be called the mighty God*, Isa. ix. 6. This appears by the great works he did and does. He set up the world by his power, *Without him was not made any thing that was made*, Joh. i. 3. He governs the world; Providence belongs to Christ as well as to the Father: *My Father worketh hitherto and I work*, Joh. v. 17. And his power appears in being a chief corner stone of the church; if he had not almighty power, such a burden would break him to pieces. Next to the bearing of his Father's wrath, there is no such heavy bur-

den as the sustaining of all the concerns of the church. Consider what a vast fabric it is ; and what potent enemies it hath ; a world of wicked men, with legions of powerful spirits ; and how weak every stone is in itself ; and the multitude of its concerns ; and it will appear, that he that bears up this building, must be a person of vast and infinite strength. *Thou hast laid strength on one that is mighty*, Psl. lxxxix. 17. (7.) *The nearness of Christ to his church.* The name of the Lord is called *Jehovah Sham-mah*, Ezek. ult. Christ hath promised to be with it for ever, Mat. xxviii. ult. He seems sometimes to be far off, to try how his people will act in his absence ; the nature and ingenuity of the child is best seen in his father's absence. But though he seem to be at a distance, yet he is near ; he may be out of sight, but never out of call. *The Lord is near to all them that call upon him.* This metaphor showeth this ; the corner stone is not far from the roof, and yet Christ is nearer to his people, than the corner stone is to the next stone of the building. He is not only with them, but in them. Joh. xvii. 23.

II. For Exhortation. It commends four things to believers. (1.) *Take heed of building upon any other foundation.* Christ spoke of a double foundation, Mat. vii. 24. 26. *The rocky foundation* is Christ, and faith in him ; *The sandy foundation* is manifold. *Some build their hopes of salvation on their good works.* This is the foundation of the Papists. They hope to be saved by their doing. See Luk. xvii. 10. And Rom. ix. 31 to 33. Building on works is not a divine, but a human foundation. *Some build upon outward profession.* This is the foundation of carnal professors, Luk. xiii. 26, 27. *Some build upon their good meanings.* They have as good a heart to God as the best. This is the foundation of ignorant Protestants. Whatsoever foundation of salvation, grace, or comfort, besides Christ, is laid, is sand, and will appear so at the day of judgment. The apostle cuts off all other foundations but Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 11. He did not speak ignorantly, for he saith, v. 10, that he was a wise master-builder. They are but ignorant botchers, that build, or teach others to build, either hope of comfort or of salvation, upon any other foundation. In one word, all foundations of salvation besides Christ, how specious soever they be, will prove at last foundations of damnation. Arminian, Socinian, Popish corner stones will

moulder. (2.) *Acknowledge upon whom all your spiritual good doth depend.* All your graces, comforts, ~~privileges~~, are bottomed on Christ. He lies as the foundation of all. Our Election, Eph. i. 4 ; Justification, Eph. v. i. ; Adoption, Eph. i. 5 ; and Salvation. He is called not only a Saviour, but salvation in the abstract, Isa. lxii. 11. Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh. Whatever good we have, or hope for, is for him. *He is made to us of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. That you sink not, is from Christ alone. (3.) *Cast the care and burden of all your concernments by faith on Christ*, Psl. lv. 22. *Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he will sustain thee*, 1 Pet. v. 7. *Casting all your care on him.* Those two words, burden and care, take in all our concerns whatsoever. There are many burdens. And then how many burdens is a believer liable unto? A crowd of cares come in daily. Cast these by an act of faith on Christ. He is the corner stone, he hath undertaken to bear the burden. Honour him, as well as ease yourselves, by casting all on him. (3.) *Be stable.* Stedfastness is often commended to Christians, as 1 Cor. xv. ult. *Be stedfast, unmoveable* ; and 2 Pet. iii. 17. Let those stones totter and shake, that have a shaking foundation. The instability of believers is some disparagement to Christ, the corner stone on which they are built.

III. For Consolation. This may comfort believers. (1.) *Against their own weakness.* Who that knows his own heart, but finds his graces weak? Every temptation shakes him, as if it would shake him to pieces. Remember to thy comfort, Christ is the corner stone of thy grace, as well as of thy salvation. He hath strength, though you be weak. (2.) *In case of the totterings of the church.* Such blasts arise sometime as threaten its ruin. Remember the corner stone ; yea, he is the corner, as well as the corner stone.

SERMON XX. 1 PET. 2---6.

“ *Christ the chief corner stone, elect, and precious.* ”

I PROCEED to the properties of this corner stone. 1. *It is elect.* This word hath a double signification. It signifies choice, excellent ; and elected or chosen. Gerhard thinks

eklektos, in this place, is not used participially for *elect* or *chosen*; but nominally, for excellent and precious. But I rather conceive for elected or chosen. This signification have our translators given it, which appears correct, for two reasons. (1.) Otherwise this and the next word, *entimos*, would signify the same thing. And its not probable that the Holy Ghost, in such short speeches, should use two words to signify one thing. (2.) Because v. 4 of this chapter, where the same words are used, it signifies not *choice*, but elected or chosen; for so its said, *para Theo eklekton kai entimon*, which is but a recapitulation of the text. It refers to the act of God in chusing Christ for the corner stone of the church. Doct. *That Christ is chosen by God for the corner stone or foundation of the church.* God the Father hath elected him. Here are two parts.

I. The reference of this election.

II. Why Christ was thus elected.

1. For the former. This election refers to four acts of God. (1.) *To his eternal designation* of Christ to this work. The determination of God was, that Christ should perform this office in and for his church, 1 Pet. i. 20, *proegnosmenos*. (2.) *To his public mission*. As he was foreordained before all time, so he was publicly sent in the fulness of time, Gal. iv. 4, 5. Isa. lxi. 1. *He hath sent me, &c.* (3.) *To the divine unction*. God hath anointed the human nature, filled it with all graces, and with abundance of grace for this work, Isa. lxi. 1. And more fully, Isa. xi. 2 to 4. Christ calls it, God's *sealing of him*, Joh. vi. 27. This sealing refers to two things. First, *The solemn appointment of God*. God hath authorised him publicly under this broad seal for this work. Secondly, *God hath furnished him for the work, by communicating to him the unmeasureable fulness of his spirit*. For the spirit is not given to him by *measure*, Joh. iii. 34 (4.) *To the public testimony given by God to Christ*. God hath given very solemn testimony and approbation to Christ. By audible voices from heaven; once, at his baptism, Mat. iii. 17; again, at his transfiguration, Mat. xvii. 5. By serious recommendation of him in the Gospel to men, that they should rely upon him. See 1 Joh. v. 10, 11.

2. Why Christ was elected: the great moving cause is, his mere mercy to his elect. No other was able;

but he was sufficient to discharge this great work. Out of his rich love did God chuse him; upon this hinge all turns, Joh. iii. 16. But if the reasons be demanded why Christ should have such solemn election, &c. These may be considered, (1.) *The offices which Christ undertook* did call for this divine election; he was to be Prophet, Priest, and King; it was therefore fit that he should be thus solemnly set out. Prophets must be sent, else they are none of God's, Jer. xxiii. 21. Christ was a prophet, therefore he would have a formal authorization from him whose prophet he was, Deut. xviii. 18. Christ was a king, Psl. ii. 6. Therefore fit he should be sufficiently authorized, Psl. cx. 1. Christ was a priest, therefore he must be lawfully consecrated, Heb. v. 4 to 6. *No man taketh this honour, &c.* (2.) Else that which Christ did, would not have been accepted of God, nor meritorious for his church. It would have been sacrilege for Christ to have made himself a corner stone, if God had not chosen him for the work. *This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased*, Mat. iii. 17. God would not have been well pleased with Christ, if he had not elected him for the work he undertook. (3.) For the comforting of Christ, in undergoing his sufferings to carry on this work he must endure the wrath of God, and the contradiction of sinners, before he could be the corner-stone. Divine appointment comforts a man in the hardest sorrows, see Gen. xxxi. 9. The consideration of this, strengthened and comforted Christ in all he suffered, Joh. xviii. 11.

The uses of this. (1.) *The Father and the Holy Ghost have a hand in the work* of man's salvation, as well as Christ; we scarcely take notice of the father, in the work of redemption, as if he only did look on and approve what Christ did; he acts in it as well as Christ, he chose, sent out and fitted Christ for this great work. Though the second person was incarnate, yet both the first and third concur and contribute to the work. The divine election is the first wheel that moves in this work. (2.) *The work of our salvation by Christ, is not a rash work*; 'tis not a work of inconsideration, or precipitancy, but a serious work; there was much deliberation and consultation about it. Here is mention of electing Christ; it's a work of infinite

and unsearchable wisdom, see 1 Tim. iii. 16. *The manifold wisdom of God*, Eph. iii. 10. There is depth of wisdom in this work. (3.) *The Elect's salvation by Christ, is a work well pleasing to God; the pleasure of the Lord*, Isa. liii. 10. It is a great contentment to God to see it carried on, because he himself hath elected Christ to it. That which a man chuseth and contrives, he is pleased when it is carried on. God, who hath chosen Christ for the foundation, will carry on the work in his hand. (4.) *Learn why Christ is called God's elect and God's servant*, Isa. xlii. 1, 2. not as inferior to God in his divine nature, Zech. xiii. 13. Phil. ii. 6. but because he is *chosen of God* to be the foundation, and the head of the election. (5.) Let us with confidence cast ourselves on Christ. Can we choose better than God hath chosen? 'Tis an undervaluing, not only of God's love, but of his wisdom, to choose another foundation: God will take it ill if we reject his choice; adventure on him, believe and trust in him without doubting. He that hath elected Christ, will not reject those that accept and rely on him. The election of God will mightily aggravate the refusal of Christ. Encourage faith by this, *He that believeth in him shall not be ashamed*. (6.) Very great comfort to them that have built on Christ. God doth not choose mouldering, but firm stones. If God have any wisdom to choose, Christ is sufficient to bear all their weight. *He hath laid help on one that is mighty*, Ps. lxxxix. 19. Let what blasts will come, this elect stone will hold.

SERMON XXI. 1 PET. 2—6.

“Entimos, Precious.”

I go on to this second property of this corner-stone, in this word *entimos*, precious. The word here used, signifies that which is of great worth or value in itself, and is much prized and esteemed by another. A thing and a person may be valuable in itself, and not valued by others; and a thing may be highly in itself esteemed, which is of no great worth; but this word signifies both: that it denotes the worth of things or persons, see Luk. xiv. 8. *When thou art bidden to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more*

honorable man than thou be bidden of him, (entimotos.) That it signifies the valuation, or high esteem of things or persons appears from Phil. ii. 29. The Apostle writes to the church about *Epaphroditus*, that they would receive him, and *hold such in reputation, (tous toious entimous echete)* make much of such, let them be dear to you. 'Tis opposed to *atimos*, which signifies one of no esteem or account amongst men.

Doct. *That Jesus the chief corner-stone of the Church is exceedingly precious.* As he is a stone of God's chusing, so he is a choice one; he is therefore precious, because he is of God's choice. Christ is a corner-stone precious in himself, and it is our great sin, if he be not precious unto us; he is not only *entimos*, precious, but *polutimos*, of very great price, Mat. xiii. 46. What is that pearl of great price, but Christ himself; to obtain which, a wise merchant will readily part with all that he hath. Nothing is worth a man's all, but him. While even the best are worth nothing compared to him; he is a precious, as well as an elect stone. In the handling this doctrine, I shall open two things.

1. In what respects Christ is precious.

2. Why so meanly esteemed by men.

I. For the first. Christ is precious in four respects.

1. *In the account of God.* He is the delight both of the father and the spirit; God values him as a pearl of great price. (1.) He is in Scripture called the Son of his bosom. The only begotten Son who is in the *bosom of his Father*, Joh. i. 18. As men and women shew their esteem of jewels and pearls by wearing them at their bosom, so doth God testify his high esteem of Christ by laying him in his bosom. The Son of God never was, nor will be, out of the bosom of the Father. (2.) The public testimony which God gave from heaven of him at his baptism, is an evidence of the high esteem he hath of him, Mat. iii. 17. *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* (3.) *He is so precious in God's account,* that the Father will accept of none but through him, nor will he reject any, whom he recommends to him. (4.) *The great design of God in the Gospel is to put honour upon Christ.* He commands all men to *honour the Son as they honour the Father.* All the good he

bestows upon men is in, and through Christ alone. (5.) *The Father would never have put such a trust into his hands, as the redeeming and saving the elect, if he had not been of precious account in his sight.* (6.) *His present session at God's right hand, is a full and manifest proof how dear he is to him.* God hath set him there as a testimony of the highest account of him, 1 Pet. iii. 22.

2. *He is precious in the esteem of the angels.* The angelic host did him honour at his birth, Luk. ii. 13, 14. They tuned their instruments, and sang with a loud voice, *Glory be to God in the highest.* As God hath commanded them, Heb. i. 6, so they do continually worship him. They are ready at his beck to do his will. They *ascend and descend upon the Son of Man*, Joh. i. 15. Not as if they ministered to Christ alone, but to honour Christ, they go forth at his command, to serve his church as he gives them charge. The angels worship the Son with the very same adoration as they worship the Father. Christ is very high in their books.

3. *He is precious in the esteem of the Saints.* Both the Saints triumphant and militant; for the saints triumphant, see how they adore him, Rev. v. 8, 9. and the saints militant, have an high esteem of him; they glory and triumph in him; they venture their whole salvation upon him, and disesteem all other things in respect of him. *Count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*, Phil. iii. 7, 8. They are joyful when they have communion with him. See v. 7, *Unto you that believe he is precious*; he is but a nominal believer that doth not account Christ precious: and behold how the church speaks of him, Cant. v. 10. *He is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands.*

4. *He is precious in himself.* This I shall shew you in three particulars. (1.) *In the glory of his person.* Never did such a person appear in the world as in Christ; he is truly God, and truly and properly man. The divine and human nature never hypostatically met in any person, besides him. The Apostle says, Heb. i. 3. *He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.* Col. ii. 10. *He is the head of principalities and powers.* The highest and most glorious Angel compared to Christ, is but a dark and a sullied creature. He excels the Angels in the glory of his person far more than they do the meanest of men. All the divine attributes are appro-

priated to Christ as he is the son of God, as well as to the father. He is eternal, Mic. v. 2. *His goings forth are from everlasting.* immutable, Heb. i. 12. omniscient, Heb. iv. 13. omnipotent, Isa. ix. 6. In one word, he is as God every way equal to the Father, Phil. ii. 6. There are such mysteries in the person of Christ, as shall be matter of admiration both to men and angels to all eternity. There is in Christ *allo kai allo*, though not *allos kai allos*, identity of person, and diversity of natures, and these united without composition or confusion, both natures retaining their distinct properties, and yet both making but one person. (2.) *In the glory of his qualifications and endowments*, Christ is endued with such rare gifts and graces as never any before. Psl. xlv. 7. *God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with oil of gladness above thy fellows*, Col. ii. 3. *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. i. 19. *It pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell.* The fulness of grace in Christ excels the fulness of all other persons in these three respects. *In him are all kinds of fulness.* He hath not only the fulness of parts, but of degrees also. The best of saints have only the fulness of parts. There may be additions made to their fulness. But in Christ is fulness of degrees. There can be no additions made to his fulness. The spirit which is given to others in measure, is given to Christ without measure, Joh. iii. 34. *In Christ there is the fulness of redundancy, as well as of sufficiency.* All other persons have only a fulness of sufficiency. The angels, albeit they want nothing which is agreeable to their estate, have no overplus to redound to others. But in Christ is the fulness of redundancy; he hath not only the fulness of the vessel as others, but of the fountain, whereby he is able to communicate unto others, Zech. xiii. 1. *A fountain shall be set open for sin and for uncleanness.* He hath the fulness of the root, of the heap, of the sun. Hence men are invited to him, to partake of his fulness, Isa. lv. 1. All the fulness in the saints, is communicated from him to them, Joh. i. 16. *Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.* All this fulness in Christ, is in him after a peculiar and special manner. See Col. i. 19; the phrase of dwelling, which notes a three-fold difference in fulness, as it is in Christ, from fulness as it is in the saint. *'Tis in him originally.* That

fulness in the saints is in them derivatively. They have it from another, but Christ hath his fulness from himself. The Divinity doth fill and replenish the humanity with all kinds of grace. *'Tis in Christ essentially.* As he is God, his fulness is his essence. *The fulness of the Godhead dwells in him (somaticos) bodily,* Col. ii. 9; that is, personally and essentially. *'Tis in him unchangeably.* It is maintained constantly at the same height; without abatement or power of abatement. It's always high tide with him. The fulness of the saints, is the fulness of a dish, which is abated, if one drop be taken away; but the fulness of Christ is as the fulness of the fire, which, though it kindle hundreds of sticks, yet is not abated; or as the fulness of the sun, which, though it send down its beams continually upon the world, is not darkened. Never was any person endowed with so many excellencies, in such a measure and manner, as Christ. No perfection can be named or imagined, which is not to be found transcendentally in him; wisdom, beauty, meekness, patience, heavenliness, &c. All Christian virtues are called the virtues of Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 9. *tas aretas*; both because they were all eminently in him, and when in the saints, are from Christ. (4.) *In the worth of his sufferings.* *Timion aima*, 1 Pet. i. 19. 'Tis precious, not only because of the dignity of the person who shed it, called therefore the blood of God, Acts xx. 28, but because of its great virtue, merit, and precious effects. By the virtue of this blood, remission of sin is purchased, and the redemption of the elect is perfected, Rom. iii. 25. Heb. ix. 12. *By his own blood he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* By its preciousness, God and man are reconciled, Col. i. 20 to 22, and the conscience sanctified, Heb. ix. 14, and the way to heaven opened for all the elect, Heb. x. 19. The sufferings of Christ are so precious, that if ten thousand worlds existed, there would be a redundancy of merit in Christ to save them all.

II. Christ is so meanly esteemed by the greatest part of men, because of ignorance, pride, and prejudice. 1. *They are ignorant of him.* The greatest part of the world is quite blind in spiritual things, 1 Cor. ii. 14, especially in the worth of Christ. A blind man can see no more excellency in a precious stone than in a common one

A blind Christian can see no more worth in Christ than in another person, Cant. v. 9. *What is thy beloved, more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? &c.* Here is their ignorance; had they known any thing of him, they would not have said, *What is thy beloved?* The wisdom of the Gospel, whereby Christ is made known, is hidden wisdom; *'Tis wisdom in a mystery*, 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8, which none can understand but those that are savingly enlightened. This ignorance of Christ, under which the greatest part of men are held, ariseth, partly, *from the negligence and slothfulness in men.* They are idle, and will not take pains to study the Word of God which sets out Christ. They cast the Scriptures from them. Christ saith, Joh. v. 39, *That the Scriptures testify of him*; men do not search them as they should; either they read not at all, or else superficially; do not pray that God would discover Christ to them in and by the Word. Hence they are ignorant of him. Partly, *from their Atheistical unbelief of what they hear reported by others.* Though they cannot but hear sometimes the reports of Christ in the public ministry, yet they will give no assent of faith, but oppose and reject them as the fancies of men. Isa. liii. 1. *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* saith Calvin upon the same place. Scarce the hundredth part of those that hear the Gospel, yield a cordial assent to it. Partly, *from a judiciary hand of God upon them.* God usually punisheth voluntary blindness with a penal and judiciary blindness. See Isa. vi. ult. *Go, and preach this to the people, saying, Seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive; and hearing, ye shall hear, and not understand, &c.* The Apostle makes application of this text to the unbelieving Jews, who would not receive what he had with so much clearness proved concerning Jesus from *Moses* and the prophets, Acts xviii. 23 to 26. When men that live under the Gospel shut their own eyes, God ratifies it by an act of his justice, and saith, *Be thou blinded for ever.* When a man hardens his own heart, God is pleased to ratify it in heaven, and saith, *Let that heart never be softened.* Joh. xii. 37, &c. Now because men neglect the study of the Gospel, which shews what Christ is; and refuse to assent to, and close with what the ministers of God report out of the Gospel concerning Christ, and because God punisheth the voluntary blinding their

eyes with a judicial blinding, therefore do they remain ignorant of the preciousness of Christ, and disesteem him.

2. *Their Pride.* The greatest part of men, even those that live under the Gospel, are puffed up with arrogance and self-conceit. They dream that they are in so good a condition already, that Christ cannot make them better. They are full of vain confidences; some fleshly boasting or other is in their hearts, some carnal city of refuge they erect for themselves besides Christ, and this makes Christ less precious to them than he would otherwise be. *We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*, Phil. iii. 3. He that creates any fleshly ground of confidence to himself, (and all confidences are fleshly which are not bottomed on Christ.) will not much rejoice in Christ. Now there are in the minds of men abundance of false confidences and carnal imaginations; the Apostle hints at them, though he do not expressly name them, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. There are many significant words used by the Apostle, *ochuromata*, munitions, fortifications, strong holds, *logismous*, reasonings. Abundance of fond reasonings are in the minds of men; they reason themselves into heaven upon very poor and slender premises. *Upsomata*, strange heightenings of themselves have men in which they rejoice, which will be found groundless another day; *noemata*, swarms of foolish thoughts, which they bandy up and down in their souls. One man makes wealth his strong hold; another reasons himself into heaven because of some church privilege. A third is mightily heightened upon his civil righteousness; a fourth thinks all is well with him, because others have a good opinion of him. Every man by nature abounds with some or all of these. Therefore is Christ so mean and inconsiderable in their esteem. 3. *They are prejudiced against Christ.* Though no man hath any reason, or good argument, against Christ, yet have they many prejudices which lay low in their hearts. What those prejudices are, I shall name, when I come to handle v. 8, where Christ is said to be *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*; where I shall shew what prejudices men have against his doctrine, worship, followers, &c. And while prejudices lie against Christ, he will never find that esteem which is meet. A man can never think highly of any person or thing against which he hath taken up a

prejudice, though they be ever so deserving. *Ahab's* prejudice against the prophets of the Lord, would not suffer him to hear them, 1 Kings xxii. 8.

SERMON XXII. 1 PET. 2—6.

“Entimos, Precious.”

I PROCEED to the Uses, which are,

1. Information. 2. Examination. 3. Exhortation.

1. Information. Here are two parts. 1. *The exceeding great glory of the church of Christ.* The Scripture tells us that the Church of God is a glorious body. Though the Church taken in its more large acceptation, as it contains all visible professors, be in many respects less glorious, because of its being a field, wherein is both *wheat and tares*, a barn floor, wherein is both *good corn and chaff*; a net, in which are *fishes good and bad*; yet, more strictly taken for the number of them that are effectually called, the invisible church is a very glorious society. Eph. v. 27, (*endoxon ten ekklesian.*) It's glorious as of the holiness of the members, so chiefly because of Christ the glorious foundation. A house whose corners are laid with precious stones, and whose superstructory stones are all lively stones, must needs be glorious. Never such a building in the world as is the Church of God. Isa. liv. 11. *O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundation with sapphires, &c.* 'Tis much like Rev. xvi. 10 to 12, &c. Every thing which is in the church makes for its glory. Glorious in its members, who are clothed with the glory of God; glorious in the worship used, the ordinances dispensed, and the doctrines maintained by it. Calvin, I remember, understands by those precious stones mentioned, Isa. liv. 11. 12, the variety of the gifts and graces of God to his people. Paul understands by them, the doctrine taught in the church, 1 Cor. iii. 11. The church is glorious, both in its doctrines, and the various gifts and

graces of its members. But the great glory of all lies in the foundation stone, Jesus Christ. That must needs be a precious building, which hath its foundation on such a precious stone as Christ, who is a great deal more above all precious stones, than they are above common ones. Because, *He excels them in largeness*. Other precious stones are but of a small dimension, and of a very little weight. You may put many of the largest, that ever were seen, into a small cabinet, but Christ is very great. As God, he is infinite without dimension, filling heaven and earth with his presence, Isa. xl. 12, 13. *Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted out the heaven with a span? and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?* That all this is spoken of Christ, see v. 11, where he is prophesied of, as the shepherd of his flock. *He excels them in duration*. Other pearls and precious stones are of a perishing nature; they may be defaced, broken, dissolved, and lose their beauty. There's a day coming when they shall be melted away into nothing. Cleopatra dissolved a pearl of very great worth, by the art of chemistry, and drank it at one draught to her Antony. But Jesus is a durable, precious stone. Neither time nor eternity will be able to dissolve him; his beauty cannot be lost nor diminished; he never will have any flaw, nor crack, nor spot in him, in the eyes of those that are able to judge aright of him. His brightness is unfading. *The heavens and the earth fade, and wax old like a garment*, but he is still the same, and his years have no end, Heb. i. 11, 12. *He excels them in the multiplicity and perfection of his properties*. There is not any precious stone that hath all excellencies and virtues in it: some excel in one property, some in another. Whether their medicinal virtues be considered, or their other excellencies, as their colour, their form, their roundness, &c. But the virtues and excellencies of all pearls and precious stones meet in Christ. Whatsoever perfection is to be found in any created stone, is to be found in Christ. The properties of the sapphire, the diamond, the chrysolite, the sardonix, the amethyst, and of all other stones, meet in Christ altogether; and then they are all in him in a far more transcendent manner than in any of these. His brightness is above the diamond; his whiteness far exceeds the pearl. The medicinal and phy-

sical properties in Christ, are far more excellent than those in other precious stones. Some pearls, they say, strengthen the heart ; others clear the sight ; others remove the *vertigo* or *dizziness* of the head ; and many other useful properties are recorded by learned men. But none of them are so excellent in any of these kinds as Christ, for he removes the distempers of the soul and mind, as well as of the body ; he cures the spiritual eye-sight, Rev. iii. 18. ; and the troubles of the conscience, which no other precious stone can do, being never so artificially used. He being rightly applied and taken, cures the soul of sin, and removes guilt, which none other precious stone can do. The necklace of pearl cannot cure the wounds of conscience, the girdle of diamonds cannot remove tremblings from the spirit ; the costly jewel in the bosom cannot quiet the heart throbbing for sin or God's departure ; all this Christ can do. *He excels them, because he hath no hurtful qualities.* Other precious stones have a killing quality ; powder of diamonds, they say, is poisonous, and, put in the bowels or throat, takes away life presently. But Jesus hath no destructive quality. He is occasion of hurt to none, but to him that refuseth him. Put all these together, and it will appear, that the church of God which is erected upon, and united unto such a precious foundation, must needs be a glorious church.

2. *The great riches of true believers.* A member of Christ, how poor soever in outward riches, is the richest man in the world, for he doth possess Christ, who is a stone of invaluable worth. If you knew a man had an estate worth all the precious stones in the world, you would account him a very rich man. A believer hath one precious stone in his possession, of greater worth than all the precious stones which now are, or ever were in the world. When other men boast of their jewels, you boast of your Christ ; or tell you what rich sparkling diamonds they have, you bring out this precious stone, and lay it before them. When you hear others speaking of the costly foundation of their houses, you think what a glorious foundation your souls are built upon. He that wants Christ is the truly poor man, whatever he enjoys. He is rich, we say, whom God loves, he is rich that inherits Christ ; if thou hadst thy house full of diamonds, thou wouldst judge thyself a wealthy man. If Christ be thine, thou hast much more. *I counsel thee to buy gold of me, that thou mayest be rich.*

Rev. ii. 18. 'Tis not the gold of the earth, but Christ's gold, that makes men rich. Though thou hast no house to dwell in, nor a foot of land to tread upon; not one penny in thy purse, yet, if thou art a true believer, thou art more wealthy than the greatest emperor in the world, for thou hast not Christ for his portion. Thou hast a precious stone, which will serve to spend for eternity, and never waste nor diminish.

II. *For examination. Let us try whether Christ be precious to us.* Many are deceived in their thoughts about him, they think they esteem him a precious stone, who account him but an ordinary one. It will be necessary therefore, to lay down some notes to distinguish a true from a false esteem of Christ. Take four. (1.) *Are you willing to part with every thing you have, that you may enjoy Christ?* Our Saviour lays this down as an evidence of a real prizeing of Christ., Mat. xiii. 46. he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Not as if Christ were our purchase, for he is the Father's free gift, Joh. iii. 16. but the meaning is, that he that esteems Christ as a pearl of price; will let nothing stand in the way between him and Christ; he will part with every thing, rather than go without him, see Phil. iii. 7, 8. *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ, &c.* He that esteems Christ aright, will leave all his sins for Christ, and his honours and preferments in the world, when he cannot keep them and Christ together; as the noble Marquess *Galeacius* did; he will part with all his morality, or civil righteousness, rather than not enjoy Christ. No terms are hard, no conditions difficult, so that Christ may be possessed. He who will not let every thing go that hinders him from Christ, doth not esteem him truly precious. The young man in the Gospel declared that Christ was not precious to him, because he would not part with his riches to enjoy him, Luk. xviii. 23. *He went away sorrowful, for he was very rich* 2 *What desire have you of fellowship with Christ?* He that esteems him precious indeed, thinks he hath never enough of him. The church testifies her dear esteem of him, by her passionate desire of communion with him, Cant. i. 13. *A bundle of myrrh is my well beloved to me; he shall lodge all night between my breasts:* the place of affections. There the heart is, that shall be Christ's chamber; precious stones that are valued, are laid up in the safest cabinet. Where Christ is valued

aright, he is laid up in the best cabinet, the very heart. The soul that values him aright is never weary of his presence. He will willingly neglect no opportunity, and no meeting, where he thinks Christ may be found. *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest?* Cant. i. 7. Jesus is much in the thoughts of him that truly esteema him. He is never at ease, but when he is with him; he likes no discourse so well as that which hath Christ in it. He is a man even swallowed up with the meditations of Christ. 3. *Is every thing of Christ precious to you?* He that hath right appreciations of Christ, doth account him every way precious. His precepts are as precious as his promises, his life as his death, his holy steps as his blood. Many men think they account very highly of Christ, who only account meanly of him. They cry him up in his sufferings and satisfaction, and down as much in his obedience. The promises of Christ are sweet, but his precepts are bitter to them. His meritorious death is highly extolled, but his exemplary life is but meanly accounted of: his priestly office is glorious, but his kingly and prophetic offices are contemptible. They would have Christ to save them, but not to sanctify them. They do indeed cry up Jesus, but they cry down Christ. They prize his blood, but despise his graces. They like Christ's intercession, but not his sovereignty: they would have him glorify them in heaven, but will not allow him to command them on earth. All such partial prizing of Christ is nothing. As the right of receiving Christ is to receive him wholly, so the right of prizing him is to prize him wholly. He is not prized at all, if he be any way despised. *Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption,* 1 Cor. i. 30. The church values Christ wholly, Cant. v. 11, 12, &c. *His head, his locks, his eyes, his hands, his lips, &c.* Many do much value the hands of Christ, by which he gives rewards; but not his lips, by which he gives commands. A true prizer of Christ esteems his mouth as much as his hands.

4. *What opinion have you of those that are like Christ?* It is an eternal truth, that whosoever hath a right esteem of Christ cannot but value those who are like him, and that merely because they have his image, 1 Joh. v. 1. *Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.* He that saith he looks upon Christ as

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precious, and hates them that are like him, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. God will set such men down, not for the prizers, but the despisers of Christ.

3. For Exhortation. This may commend several duties to all. 1. *Bless God for this precious stone.* The more excellent Christ is, the more should our hearts be enlarged to bless God for him. How exceedingly great is his love to his church, who hath laid for their foundation such a precious stone as Christ; had he not greatly and dearly loved you, he would not have parted with this precious stone out of his bosom. He had given you nothing, if he had not given you Christ; and now you have Christ he will not deny you any thing, Rom. viii. 32. *He that spared not his own Son, &c. How shall he not together with him also freely give us all things?* God hath taken away all ground of questioning other things, from them to whom he hath given Christ. He that gives a man freely his best jewel, will not stick with him for a few common stones. Let not a day go over your heads without praises to God for Jesus. 2. *Let this encourage every one to build on him.* We have encouragement enough, because he is elected of God, and is so precious. Build not your salvation on those rotten stones of merit, or freewill, &c. but upon this precious stone, Christ. He undoes himself, who leaves this for any mean corner stone, which God hath never designed. He is an unwise Christian, that refuseth a foundation of precious stones to build on a sandy foundation. 3. *Whatever hath reference to Christ, let it be precious.* 2 Pet. i. 1. Faith is precious, because it lays hold on so precious a Christ, and on so precious promises, and because it works such precious effects, &c. We should have a care that the faith which hath to do with Christ be actively precious. 'Tis precious when it's right bred, when it's active, and of the best sort. So love Christ, with a precious love; not with an ordinary, but with a choice affection. Fear Christ with a precious fear; obey him with a precious obedience, that is, an obedience of the best kind; and worship him with precious worship. It will be another evidence that Christ is precious to us, when we have a care that every thing which refers to him be choice and precious. *Cursed is the deceiver, that hath a male in his flock, and sacrificeth to God a corrupt thing: for I am a great King,* Mal. i. 14. That's the reason rendered. God's

greatness should make men offer of the best they have. Christ is a very precious stone. Whatever relates to him, it's fit should be precious as he is precious. 4. *Esteem him higher than you have done.* Let your thoughts of him be raised and sublimated. Consider three things. The more you prize him, the closer you will stick to him. He is easily seduced from Christ, that hath low thoughts of him. High appreciations will help us much against seduction. The more you prize him, the better you will obey him. The esteem of a person maketh service done with more freedom of spirit and readiness of mind. The more you prize him, the more cheerfully will you suffer for him; respect for the person for whom we suffer, makes hard and heavy burdens light. *Amor meus crucifixus.* No reproaches will damp that soul to whom Christ is precious.

SERMON XXIII. 1 PET. 2—8.

“A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.”

THE Apostle having in the former verse, declared what Christ is to believers, doth in this, shew what he is to unbelievers; he is to them a corner-stone, sanctified and appointed of God, to support and bear them up against all shakings from within, and assaults from without; he is to these, through their disobedience and incredulity, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, upon which they dash themselves to pieces without recovery. Here are two words used, but they denote one and the same thing, only they are doubled, to shew the certainty and reality of the thing threatened. *Lithos* and *Petra* do not much differ in this place. • *Lithos* may denote a single stone, *petra* a multitude of stones. *Proskomma skandalon*; though they do something differ in their etymologies, yet as to the sense and meaning, in this place they do not differ, as is well observed by *Estius* and other learned men. *Proskomma* is from *proskopto*, to dash against a thing; it signifieth a stone, or any other impediment cast in a man's way, against which

he dasheth his foot, and so stumbleth and falleth. *Skandalon* comes from *skaza*, to halt, and is used for any thing which is an occasion of ruin. *Stephanus* observes, that it is a word peculiar to Scripture, never used in any profane author. It signifies properly, the bridge in the trap, which, by its falling down, catches the creature in the snare, and so ruins it; and from thence is used to denote any thing which is occasion to others of stumbling or falling in the ways of God. Now, offence or scandal is twofold. It is either offence given or received, actively or passively. 1. Offence given, or active scandal, is, when the error or fault is on his part who lays the scandal. This is an offence of grief, or fall. An offence of scandal or grief, when any thing is done or said which gives just occasion of sorrow unto our brethren. An offence or scandal of falling is, when any thing is spoken or done whereby an occasion of sinning is given to our brethren, 1 Cor. viii. 9 to 11. This is done either by evil counsel, Mat. xvi. 23. Rom. xvi. 8. Rev. ii. 14.; by evil example, Isa. ix. 16. Mat. xv. 14.; or by abuse of Christian liberty, in the use of things indifferent, Rom. xiv. and 1 Cor. 8. 2. Offence taken, or passive scandal, is, when things, or words, which are both good and reasonable, are by sinister and perverse malignity of mind made an occasion of offence. Thus the doctrine of Christ's cross was an offence and scandal, 1 Cor. i. 23. It was foolishness to the wise, self-conceited Greeks, and a stumbling block to the malignant Jews. Now when *Peter* saith, Christ is a stone of stumbling and rock of offence, we are to understand it passively, not actively. Neither Christ, nor any thing of Christ's is a just occasion of offence to any. His counsel was good, his example was holy, his whole conversation was so ordered, that none could be justly offended at him. And yet, through the wickedness of their hearts, many did then, and do still, to their own ruin, take offence at him. The observation is this, viz.

Doct. *The Lord Jesus is to wicked men a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.* Though Christ be in himself a precious corner stone of God's own appointment and chusing, yet do wicked men make him to themselves a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. It's very common and ordinary for wicked men to be offended and to stumble at Christ. Many places of Scripture make mention of the

offence, which the wicked take at Christ. See Isa. viii. 14, 15. Though these words be not spoken directly, yet they are spoken typically of Christ. Though he be in himself a sanctuary, and be so to the elect, yet, to the ungodly, he is both a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. As many are gathered and saved by him, so shall many be broken, and snared, and taken, because of him. To this agrees that old prophecy of *Simeon* concerning Christ, Luk. ii. 34. *Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel*, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. And as it was foretold of him, so we read in the Gospel, that it was fulfilled concerning him: many were causelessly offended at him. In the handling of this point, I shall open these two things.

First, the matter. Secondly, the causes of this causeless offence.

1. For the first. There are many occasions of offence which men take at Christ. I reduce all to these three heads. First, *Some stumble and take offence at his person*. I mean the meanness of his person. This was the great stumbling block of the Jews. They looked for a Messiah of noble birth and parentage, that should sway the sceptre of *David* with much outward pomp and glory. They expected that all those prophecies which speak of the glory of Christ's person, should have been literally fulfilled; therefore they took offence at him. His birth was mean, his parentage low and ordinary, his attendance small, his education and breeding contemptible; this made them stumble. Isa. liii. *init. He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, &c. There is no form nor comeliness in him that we should desire him*. They looked for outward splendour, and because they did not find it, they were offended. See Mat. xiii. 54 to 57. *Is not this the carpenter's son, &c.?* They did not consider that the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; that he came to be a servant, and was made under the law; and therefore they were scandalized at his meanness. We may add to this his shameful and ignominious death which he suffered; this was a great offence to the Jews. They do to this day upbraid Christians with that curse, Jer. xvii. 5. *Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm*. Christ crucified is a stumbling block to the Jews. Secondly, *Some stumble*

at his doctrine. The doctrine which Christ preached, and which by his appointment is published, is very glorious; yet it is an occasion of offence to the world. The *Arians* are offended at the doctrine of his *divine nature*. The *Manichees* at his *humanity*. The *Socinians* at his *satisfaction*. The *Papists* at *justification* by faith alone. The *Pelagians* and *Arminians* at his doctrine of nullifying the power of nature in things supernatural. The *Antinomians* stumble at his ratification of the moral law, &c. The Pharisees were offended at his doctrine against tradition, Mat. xv. 11, 12. But to come to particulars. *The strictness of his doctrine is a stumbling block to many*; it condemns not only actual sin, but the very sinful risings of corruption in the heart. *He that looks upon a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart*, Mat. v. 28, so v. 29. *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee*, &c. Some have said of these words, they are hard sayings of a hard master. If we consider the duties of the Gospel, they are not barely to be performed, but performed cordially and sincerely, else they are not accepted. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength*. Corrupt nature would have full swing and liberty; the doctrine of Christ will not allow it, therefore is offence taken at it. *The spirituality of his doctrine offends others*. The Gospel is a very spiritual doctrine, Joh. vi. 63. *The words which I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life*. 'Tis the honour of Christ's doctrine, that it is not fleshly, but spiritual, and they that are spiritual, love it, because of its spirituality. You may see the spiritualness and efficacy of the word, Heb. iv. 12. It's quick and powerful, and mighty in operation; sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, &c. Now because men are carnal, they are offended at a spiritual word. The Apostle calls it *logon emphuton*, Jam. i. 21. A carnal heart doth not love the word should be an *ingrafted word*. They are contented it should come into their ears, but not sink into their heart, therefore they are offended at it. *The mysticalness of his doctrine is a stumbling stone to others*. The Gospel is very mysterious, 1 Tim. iii. 16. 'Tis in many things above reason. The doctrine of the Trinity of persons in the unity of essence, is above reason that God should be one, and yet three. The two natures in

the person of Christ, and many others are above reason. The doctrine of self-denial; and of losing a man's life to save it; the doctrine of regeneration, and of the resurrection of the body, these are very mysterious; and because they are so, offence is taken at them. Joh. vi. 51, 52. how were the Jews offended because he had preached that *Except men did eat his flesh and blood, they had no life in him?* They strove among themselves, saying, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* Nay, not only the Jews, but many of the disciples also were offended at this doctrine, v. 60, 61. The mysticalness and height of the Gospel, do offend to this day. *The simplicity of his doctrine is an offence to others.* The Gospel is laid down with great plainness; though it be sufficiently rhetorical, yet it hath much plainness. The penmen of Scripture did purposely avoid the enticing words of men's wisdom, lest they should corrupt the hearts of men from the simplicity of Christ. 'Tis the excellency of the Gospel, that it is set down in plainness and simplicity. Painting is fitter for harlots than chaste women. Naked truth is best; if other dresses be put upon it, it is corrupted. The wise Greeks stumbled at this stumbling stone; they thought *Tully* and *Demosthenes* were more eloquent than the apostles and prophets, 1 Cor. i. 17, 18, 22, 23. Many are to this day offended at this very thing, they think there are not those strains of wit in the writings of the apostles, as are in other writings; when the truth is, the highest eloquence, is the eloquence of God in the Scriptures. *The severity of his doctrine is a stumbling stone to others.* The law and Gospel do both threaten damnation for disobedience and impenitence. The axe is laid to the root of the tree, saith *John*, Mat. iii. 10. *Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.* He that believeth not is condemned already, Mar. xvi. 16. Many are greatly offended at this; they would have smooth things, but love not this severity. They do not consider that as the Gospel is severe against sin, so it is exceeding full of comfort to all penitent sinners. *The consequences of his doctrine are an offence to others.* I shall only mention three things here. First, *reproaches and persecutions.* Seldom do men receive the doctrine of Christ in power; but the Devil and his instruments raise persecution less or more against them. You may trace the Gospel by the blood of those that have professed it. *They gnashed upon Stephen*

with their teeth, Acts vii. 52, 54. and at last stoned him with stones, that he died. To preach the Gospel, is to draw the fury of the world upon a man's self; and to profess the Gospel in sincerity and zeal, is to make a man's self a prey to the wicked; this offends many, Mat. xiii. 21, Mat. xxiv. 9. 10. The persecution which hath followed Christ's doctrine hath made thousands scandalized at him. Secondly, *divisions and contentions*. Though Christ be *the Prince of peace*, and his Gospel the Gospel of peace, yet by reason of men's corruptions, it causes great divisions. Luk. xii. 40. *I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?* so Mat. x. 34, 35. These are not the effects, but the consequence of the Gospel, it meets with men's corruptions, which because they will not have destroyed, they are enraged; this offends many. Hence some have profanely wished that the Bible were burnt, they have looked upon it as the great make-bait, and incendiary of the world. Thus is the doctrine of Christ made a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. Thirdly, *Some stumble and take offence at his kingdom*. I mean not only at its internal administration, by his spirit in the heart, but also at the external administration of it, both in the government of his kingdom, and its subjects.

The government of his kingdom. Multitudes are offended at this, and at the officers whom he hath appointed to administer this kingdom; decrying and reviling them as if they were not of God. *Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi: all the Lord's people are holy*, Numb. xvi. 3. All men are ministers, all may preach; there's no such office as minister in the Scripture. There's no such thing as ruler in the church. The censures also give offence to many; admonition, suspension, excommunication, men are greatly offended at. The government is too strict, too severe, 'tis tyrannical; these are the bitter words of men. The Holy Ghost foretold how men should stumble at the government of Christ's kingdom, Ps. ii. 2, 4. *Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us*. Christ's government is a general offence. 2. *The subjects of his kingdom*. Men are offended at Christ, because of his subjects, many ways. Consider these four things. 1 *Many are offended at their paucity*. Though Christ's subjects be many, simply considered, yet, comparatively, they are but few. *Narrow is the way that leadeth into everlasting life, and*

there are very few that find it, Mat. vii. 14. Satan hath a hundred servants to Christ's one. Caleb and Joshua only entered into Canaan of all the men that came out of Egypt. This causes many to stumble at Christ. Shall we be wiser than others? *This one man came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge, say those sons of Belial concerning Lot,* Gen. xix. 9. It's a great scandal that so few come in. 2. *Many are offended at their meanness and poverty.* Few of the great men of the world submit truly to Christ. *Not many wise, not many noble, not many mighty hath God chosen, but the foolish things of the world, &c.* 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. Christ foresaw that this would be an occasion of stumbling to men, therefore lays in a caveat against it, Mat. xi. 4 to 6. *Go, and tell John what you have seen and heard, &c. and blessed is he that shall not be offended in me.* The rich and wealthy oppose and reject Christ. Silk and scarlet, gold and silver, very rarely follow him, Joh. vii. 48, say the Pharisees; *have any of the rulers believed in him?* but this people that knoweth not the law is accursed. 3. *The miscarriages of which they are guilty.* The best of Christ's subjects being but sanctified in part, and having such a subtle devil to assault, too frequently miscarry and fall into sin. This causes many to be offended. Wicked men, though they never observe the holy actions of the godly, will their infirmities. One sin is more talked about, than an hundred acts of holiness: this is a scandal to the wicked, 2 Sam. xii. 14. They that would learn nothing by David's piety, took offence at his sin. Though it be unreasonable that men should be offended at Christ, for the failings of his servants; yet it is ordinary. 4. *The sad apostacy of those that have professed subjection to him.* There are in Christ's family many rotten hearted professors. The falling of these is an occasion why many are offended at Christ, Mat. xxvi. 56. The fall of such, hardens the hearts of many against Christ and his Religion, Joh. vi. 66.

SERMON XXIV. 1 PET. 2—8.

"A stone of stumbling, &c."

SECONDLY. How so many are offended at Christ. Note,

1. *Ignorance of Christ.* Blindness is one great cause of

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natural stumbling, Joh. xi. 9, 10. *If any man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.* The spiritual blindness of the mind is one principal reason why the world stumbleth at Christ; they know not the glory of his person nor the excellency of his doctrine, nor the nature of his kingdom, therefore they take offence at him. 1Cor. ii. 8. This ignorance of Christ ariseth partly *from want of studying his word*; they do not search the record which is given in the scriptures; partly, *from their infidelity*, they will not believe the report given of him, by such as have the knowledge of him, Isa. liii. *init.* The world's blindness is the cause of the world's offence. See Prov. iii. 21, and Mat. xv. 14. The blindness of the Pharisees arose from their gross ignorance. 2. *Precipitancy and rashness.* Though a man have eyes to see, yet if he be heedless and rash, his foot may stumble in a plain way. *A careless eye occasions a stumbling foot.* The greatest part of men are heedless in spiritual matters, *They rush on as the horse rushes into the battle*, Jer. viii. 6. The Scripture speaks of pondering the steps of our feet, Prov. iv. 25, 26, Most men neglect this counsel in the things of Christ; they walk at all adventure, turning their eyes now this way, now that, through their carelessness and indiscretion in not examining things, they take offence and fall. Paul's advice is, *to try and prove all things*, 1 Thes. v. Deliberation in the matters of God is a special virtue. Most men are of a hurrying spirit, and this makes them stumble. 3. *Heart distemperedness.* A man that hath either an intoxicated, or a diseased body, soon stumbles. Wicked men have hearts full of distempers. There are many unmortified lusts in their hearts, which they are not willing to part with; pride, passion, uncleanness, &c.; these are indulged; these they will not part with; they love some sin better than Christ, and because they cannot have Christ and their sins, they are offended. This is hinted in the text: such as stumble at the word, are said to be disobedient. He that allows any sin unrepented of in his heart, will sooner or latter stumble at Christ, Luk. xvi. 14. *The Pharisees who are covetous derided Christ.* Our Saviour tells them they could not serve God and Mammon, and they being given to covetousness were scandalized and derided him, *exemukterizon auton* they snuffed at him as the word signifies. Walking in uprightness, and being without offence

are joined together, Phil. i. 10. An hypocritical and profane heart will be a stumbling one. He that walks up to the knees in mire may easily stumble. Wicked men walk up to the very loins in the mire of sinful distempers, and this causeth them to be offended at Christ. *The way of the righteous is made plain*, Prov. xv. 19.; it's raised up as a causeway. Godly men walk in plain even ways; wicked men in rough, uneven, miry ways, therefore they stumble at Christ. 4. *Hatred of Christ*. Hatred will take offence at every thing done or said by the person hated. As love doth interpret all to the best, so hatred to the worst. *Ahab hated Miciah*, and therefore took offence at every thing he said, 1 Kings xxii. 8. Now wicked men hate Christ with a perfect and a cruel hatred, because of the dissimilitude between Christ and them: they are impure, Christ is pure; they are unholy, he is holy. As similitude breeds love, so dissimilitude creates hatred. Luk. xix. 14. *Christ's own Citizens hated him*. Where there is hatred, there will be offence, Mat. xxiv. 10. *Many shall be offended and they shall hate one another*. Till the soul lay aside its hatred, it will not cease to stumble at every thing of Christ. 5. *Unbelief*. Infidelity is the cause of stumbling. This may be gathered clearly from the text compared with the foregoing v. *Unto you that believe he is precious, but unto them that are unbelievers he is a stone of stumbling*. Most men walk by sense, and not by faith; they see the outside of Christ in his Gospel, but not his beautiful inside; they see that in religion which appears displeasing, but they want faith to see what is sweet and lovely, therefore they are scandalized. 6. *The bad example of others*. Examples have a very great efficacy and operation, whether good or bad; good examples are great strengthenings to them that are good, and bad examples are great provocations to them that are bad, 1 Cor. viii. 10. *Asahel's lying dead in the way, occasioned a stop in the march of others*, 2 Sam. ii. 23. One wicked man eyes the example of another, and because he sees that such were offended at Christ, especially if they be learned, wise, &c. he takes offence likewise.

The uses are for Information, and exhortation.

I. For information. It teacheth us four lessons. 1. *This may fortify us against being dejected because of the*

offence which wicked men take at us causelessly. It is too frequent to see wicked men scandalized at the people of God, even for their holy actions, for noncompliance in sinful ways, and strict observance of the Sabbath. 1 Pet. iv. 4. *The best actions of the godly are occasions of stumbling to the wicked.* Well, this text may greatly help the people of God against desponding, because of such causeless offence. If Christ was a stone of stumbling, is it any great matter if we be stones of stumbling? If they were offended at Christ, will they not be at us? It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master. God's people should take care that they give no occasion of stumbling to the worst of men; but if they will take offence at their holy practices, Saints should set but very little by such offences, Mat. xv. 14. especially considering the close of the text; *whereunto they were appointed.* 2. *What unfit and incompetent counsellors are wicked men in the matters of religion;* they may be oracles in civil and worldly things, but for the things of Christ, they are of no judgment or understanding: Christ is to them a stone of stumbling, they dash themselves in pieces upon him; they reject and despise him, both in his person and doctrine, and therefore are not to be consulted, much less followed in their advice about these matters. 'Tis a vain thing to ask advice from men about those things wherein they have no skill. Wicked men have no spiritual skill in the matters of Christ; they are more like to seduce than direct us in these. 'Tis unsafe to make them our counsellors, who are so prejudiced against the things of God. Who would put himself under conduct of a blind man, especially in a way which he had never travelled? 3. *There is nothing so good but a wicked heart will turn it to its own detriment.* A wicked heart is like a spider, it contracts poison out of the sweetest rose. Nothing better than Christ, and yet a wretched sinful heart will make him a stumbling stone. Word, ordinances, promises, mercies of all sorts, are made pitfalls and snares by a naughty heart; it undoes itself more by the mercies it receives, than by all its evils. It's a fearful imprecation of David against the wicked, Psl. lxxix. 22. *Let their table become a snare, &c.* A wicked heart is sinfully ingenious and witty to undo itself by the best things. 4. *This may be some relief to poor ministers when they see men scandalized and enraged*

against their persons or doctrines. It's a great grief to their spirits to think how the truths they preach fall under contempt, the administrations of divine ordinances quarrelled with; well, it was so with Christ, his person that was better than ours, his doctrine that was purer than ours, his administrations that were more glorious than ours. If God will have his ministers lie as stumbling blocks, upon which sinful men shall fall, so as to destroy themselves, they must be content; if God will have them preach men judicially into impenitency and hardness of heart, as Isa. vi. 10. they must bear it. Christ hardly preached a sermon, made a prayer, or dispensed any ordinance, but the greatest part of them that were present, were scandalized at him, *He was set for the fall of many in Israel, as well as for their rising*, Luk. ii. 37. If God will have his ministers so, it is not strange, especially because they are, and shall be a *sweet savour to God, both in them that perish, and in them that are saved*, 2 Cor. ii. 15.

II. Exhortation. First to the godly, secondly to the wicked. First, *Bless God that Christ is not a stumbling stone to you.* That neither his person, nor doctrine, nor kingdom offend you. The time was when you were offended with Christ as much as any, and if God should leave you to yourselves, you would stumble upon him again. That you are enabled to close with his person, to embrace his doctrine, and to submit to his government without offence, is a mighty mercy, especially when so many are scandalized, Mat. xi. 6. Secondly, *Labour so to act, that ye may not occasion others to be offended at Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 32. Paul was very careful of it himself, Acts xxiv. 16. The sinfulness of professors will make men take offence at Christ. The doctrine and government of Christ will be stumbled at, if you have not care of your ways more than ordinary. If you take not heed to yourselves, both in matter of opinion and practice, you will pave a way to make many fall upon Christ himself. Your miscarriages reflect dishonour both upon his person and doctrine, 2 Cor. vi. 3. *Give no offence that the ministry be not blamed.* Christianity, yea, Christ himself will be blamed, if you be not careful to avoid miscarriages; and besides, you will be an instrumental to damn souls, Mat. xviii. 7. *Woe unto the man by whom the offence cometh.*

For the wicked. Take heed of making Christ any longer

a stumbling stone. It's a very sad thing to stumble at Christ, 1. *It's a very sinful thing. It's a charging of wickedness upon Christ.* He that takes offence at Christ, says that there is something in him which is a matter of exception. To make him a stumbling stone, is either to profess that Christ is blame-worthy, or that thyself art foolish. What a high sin it is to asperse Christ the holy one with any miscarriage; he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, Heb. vii. 26. *It's the inlet to other sins.* It hinders the soul from loving Christ with that love that is meet; from obeying him; from believing in him; from recommending him to others; from being thankful for him; it turns the soul upon the sin of blaspheming and reviling Christ; it hinders the soul from suffering for him. He that stumbles at Christ is in the high-way to all kind of sin against him; he may easily be persuaded to set up another Christ. 2. *It's a very dangerous thing, because it makes all that Christ hath done or suffered of no effect to us.* He that stumbles at Christ, cuts himself off from all the merits and benefits of his death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession. We may say of such an one as *Paul* doth of circumcision, Gal. v. 4. *It makes Christ damnation to a person.* see Mat. xxi. 44, To turn salvation into damnation will be double damnation better to have been damned without Christ than with Christ; better a thousand times to have been destroyed without a redeemer than by a redeemer, better to die without a saviour than by a saviour. What should be done that we may stumble no more? (1.) Get a clear knowledge of Christ. (2.) Be acquainted with those that embrace him. (3.) Be truly offended at sin. (4.) Pray that God would root out of your hearts all offence. (5.) Remember what Christ hath done, and what he is still doing for you; his doctrines, his offices, his government all at which offence is taken is for your benefit and salvation. (6.) Consider that to take offence at Christ, is to stumble at God's wisdom mercy and goodness in giving and in fitting Christ.

SERMON. XXV. MAL. 4---2.

"The sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings."

THE Prophet *Malachy* hath in this book many contests with

the Jews for several impieties which raged amongst them. At the 13. v. of c. iii. he contends with them for their atheism and blaspheming of the providence of God. *Your words have been stout against the Lord, and ye have said, it is in vain to serve the Lord. They that work wickedness are set up, and they that tempt God are delivered.* Amongst other answers which the Prophet gives to this blasphemous charge; he tells them of a day coming, when God's dealings shall be manifest for them to discern a clear difference between them that *served God, and him that served him not*, v. 18. This difference which will be made between the godly and the wicked, is amplified in the 1 of this c. for *Behold the day cometh, &c.* His dealing with the wicked and disobedient, is set down fully, v. 1. *The day of the Lord cometh, that shall burn as an oven.* This day, though it be particularly meant of the day of Christ's first coming, as is clear by the context, v. 5. which is by our Saviour interpreted of *John Baptist* his forerunner, Mat. xi. 4.; yet as some good interpreters think, it may have a further reference to his second coming, when all this shall be fully accomplished. His dealing with the godly is set down, v. 2, 3. in which are two things. (1.) The great happiness for the godly, in their own persons, v. 2. (2.) Their conquest over the wicked, v. 3. *Ye shall tread down the wicked, &c.* In the happiness promised to the godly, we have these three things observable. (1.) A description of their persons, *unto them that fear my name.* This is an ordinary description whereby the people of God are distinguished from all others, Mal. iii. 16. Eccl. viii. 12. Isa. i. 10. (2.) The author of their happiness. *The Sun of righteousness.* (3.) The nature of their happiness. 1. Generally, *he shall rise upon you.* 2. Particularly. There are three great blessings which they should enjoy by his rising upon them. 1. Spiritual healing. 2. Spiritual freedom. 3. Spiritual increase. I shall wave the description of the persons of godly men, and proceed to the author of their happiness, viz; *The sun of righteousness*, for it is to open this expression, that I have chosen this text; in the handling of which, I shall have occasion to open the particular benefits which should accrue to the godly; healing, freedom, growth, *The Sun of righteousness.* The sun is used in Scripture in a double sense, 1. Properly. For that creature which God hath set in the Heavens and called by that name, Psl. cxxxvi. 8. 2.

Metaphorically, for several things, which carry some similitude to the natural sun. (1.) For God's special favour, Psl. lxxxiv. 11. *The Lord God is a sun and shield.* (2.) For comfort, Job. xxx. 28. *I went mourning without the sun,* that is, without comfort. (3.) For prosperity and settled peace, Isa. lx. 20. *Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself.* (4.) For eminency and height of condition and state, Rev. xvi. 8. *The fourth Angel poured out his vial upon the sun,* which Mr. Mede makes to be the German Empire, the sun of the papal Heaven. (5.) For Christ himself. So 'tis used in this text, he that is called the *Messenger of the Covenant*, c. iii. 1. is here called the sun of righteousness. The observation is this. Doct. *That Christ is the sun of righteousness.* Zacharias the father of John Baptist gives him a name parallel to this, Luk. i. 78. *The day-spring from on high hath visited us.* I shall by way of explication open three things.

I. In what respects Christ is called the sun.

II. Why he is called the sun of righteousness.

III. How he doth excel the natural sun.

I. Christ may be compared to the sun in three respects.

1. *In his own person.* The natural sun hath a shadow of two excellencies which are in the person of Christ. (1) *His glory and majesty.* Of all the visible works of God, there is not any so glorious as the sun; it's full of splendor and glory. The sun is *Anima mundi*, the very soul of the world; its brightness is so transcendent, that the weak eye of man is dazzled with beholding it, see Psl. xix. 5. *He is as a Bridegroom coming out of his chamber.* Never was any bridegroom, though the greatest Prince in the world, in such attire on his wedding-day, as the sun is every morning at his coming out of his chamber; so glorious, that he draws all the eyes of men to behold his appearing: and Christ is a glorious person; the sun is but blackness compared with him; his face is ten thousand times brighter than the sun when cloathed in its best apparel; he is *the bright shining of his Father's glory*, and *the express image of his person*, Heb. i. 3. When he was transfigured upon the mountain in the sight of his disciples, *His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment as white as the light*, Mat. xvii. 7. Could we but see the face of Christ as now shining at the right hand of God, we should say the sun were but sackcloth

in comparison of it; how much more bright is he in his God-head? this is so glorious, that *no man can see it and live*; his face constitutes the very glory of Heaven. (2.) *His omniscience*. The sun in the firmament travels up and down, and beholds every part of the world, *There is nothing hid from the heat of it*, Psl. xix. 6. Christ also as the son of God is perfectly omniscient, see Heb. iv. 13. There is no creature that is not manifest in his sight, &c.; yea, he sees every thing not by moving up and down as the sun, but by one fixed and constant view. There can be no fence to keep out the sight of his eye; he doth together, and at once, behold all creatures, with all their motions, thoughts, and imaginations. This is the first.

II. *In his effects and workings upon his people*. There is a great resemblance between the sun's effects upon the creatures, and Christ's upon his people. I shall instance in eight particulars. (1.) *The sun hath an enlightening virtue*. It is the great luminary which God hath appointed to carry the light abroad to the earth; it makes day, it is the great torch of Heaven, by which men and other creatures see what to do, and where to go, Gen. i. 14, 16. by it's light we see it and all other things. Christ hath an enlightening power, and doth actually enlighten the hearts of men. The soul is by nature in darkness, and never sees till Christ beam down his light upon it. All men by nature, in regard of spiritual light, are as the blind man was, Joh. ix. 6. without any spiritual sight. They see neither sins, blackness, nor their own misery by reason of sin; they see not Christ's beauty, nor grace's excellency; they have thick scales upon their eyes, as *Paul* had before his conversion, Acts ix. 18.; therefore they are called darkness, and their state darkness, Eph. v. 8. Now Christ gives them light; when he riseth upon them savingly, then, and not till then do they see their condition and their way out of it, Eph. v. 14. As the sun is the world's, so is Christ the soul's looking glass. All spiritual light given to the soul, is in and through Jesus, 2 Cor. v. 6. The gospel is the *vehiculum Lucis*, the great chariot that carries this light abroad, but the fountain of it, is this bright sun of righteousness Jesus Christ. Spiritual illumination is Christ's work, see Joh. i. 9. *John Baptist* carried the torch, but Christ himself was the light. Till this sun be, the soul lies in gross darkness, but when it appears, then light comes presently, Isa. lx. 1. When the

glory of the Lord is risen upon the soul, then is darkness expelled, and the soul shines forth. The heart that is as dark as any dungeon; when the beams of this sun are darted down into it, is as light as a paradise. Christ turns *Egypt* into *Goshen*. (2.) *The sun hath a warming virtue*. Though it be not formally hot, yet it is hot in its effect, Psl. xix. 6. its beams warm the earth, the air, and the bodies of the rational and irrational creatures. Experience teacheth that the sun hath a heating power; the light and motion of it cause heat; and Christ has a warming virtue in him. The heart that is as cold as ice, is heated and warmed by the influences of his spirit into a good temper. The luke-warm heart, when Christ shines upon it, is set into a burning heat. The beams which are cast from him in his ordinances, put the cold soul into a spiritual glow, see Luk. xxiv. 32. They were in a freezing temper till Christ overtook them, but when they had continued a-while in that spiritual sun-shine, their hearts rose into a violent flame. *Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way?* The fore-runner of Christ told the Jews, that he that came after him, would baptize men with the Holy Ghost and with fire, Mat. iii. 11. Christ can kindle the sparks of grace which seem to be dead, and put them into a burning flame. Many a Saint hath come to the ordinances with his heart like the cold earth, and before he hath departed, Christ hath sent him away like a burning lamp; the cold water hath been put into a vehement boiling, and the heart hath run over again. *Peter* grew cold at the High Priest's fire, when the beams of Christ were withdrawn, but when Christ shone upon him, his cold heart was heated. when *Elisha* had lien a-while on the *Shunamites* dead child, his *flesh waxed warm*, 2 Kings iv. 24. Though a soul be as cold as death, if Christ but stretch himself upon it, it waxes warm. (3.) *The sun hath a comforting virtue*; it is in Scripture put for comfort, Job. xxx. 28. To walk without the sun, is to walk without comfort; but it's a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun, Eccl. xi. 7. Weak and sickly persons, when brought into the sun-shine, find their spirits cheered by it. Christ hath a heart-comforting virtue; he is the first inlet of comfort into the soul; the preserver of joy in the soul, and its restorer after dejections and droopings of heart. *Noah* was herein a figure of Christ, Gen. v. 29. Jesus is the true *Noah*, the great comforter of his

people, in all the griefs and sorrows of this world ; the foundation of all true comfort to thy soul. *Tolle Christum, tolle solatium*, that reconciliation which he hath made between God and man, is the very basis of all consolation. Whatsoever in God, or the Scriptures yield any comfort to the soul, is so only in and through Christ : that comfort which is not built upon Christ, is bastard comfort, which will end in terror. The spirit of God is called the comforter; Joh. xv. 26. ; his office is immediately to cheer the soul, which he doth by making application to the soul of a sinner of that which is merited for him ; all the arguments whereby the spirit comforts the heart, are drawn from Christ, he seals to the soul that Christ is his, and so fills it with comfort. (4.) *The sun hath a healing virtue*, this is in the text. There would be no health amongst men, or any other living creature, if there were no sun : the world would be an hospital without the sun. 1. The sun dries up cold moistures, and exhales vapours which would infect the bodies of men and other creatures. 2. The sun assists the growth and vegetation of all healing plants, and in both these respects hath healing in his wings ; so Christ hath a healing virtue, he heals both as a medicine and physician ; his blood is the physic, and he himself is the physician that applies it to the soul, see Isa. lxi. 1. he heals the soul of the guilt of sin by the grace of justification, and of the filthiness of sin by the grace of sanctification. Isa liii. 5. *By his stripes we are healed*. If Christ but lay his hands upon the diseased soul, it is cured whatsoever infirmity be upon it ; the very border of his garment, if but touched with a hand of faith, cures all the bloody issues of the soul. You have a rare cure done by the touch of Christ's garment, Mat. ix, 20. There are thousands of souls in Heaven that have found perfect cure of strange diseases under the wings of Christ. (5.) *The sun hath a melting and softening virtue*. Though it parch and harden the clay, yet it softens the wax ; the hot beams of the sun melt the ice, and mollify the ground when frozen into hardness. The sun when risen, melted the manna, Exod. xvi. 21. and Christ hath a melting and softening virtue ; one hot ray from him, will dissolve and make the soul like wax, see Luk. xxii. 61, 62 ; *Peter's* heart was grown as hard as ice by his three-fold denial of Christ, and yet one beam from the eye of Christ thawed this ice into tears : the Lord turned and looked upon *Peter*, and

he went out and wept bitterly. Christ's eyes are like a flame of fire, Rev. i. 14. these heavenly beams are able to turn the flint-stone into springs of water. Those three thousand mentioned, Acts ii. 37. were as hard as marbles for they had their hands in the blood of Christ, v. 36. yet when Christ did shine upon them in the ministry of *Peter*, they were so soft that any frame could be put upon them, *Men and brethren what shall we do?* The jailor a rough hardened sinner that drew blood from the backs of the Apostles; when Christ spread his warm wings upon him, though at midnight, how was he softened? Acts xvi. 29, 30. he that was lately like a stone, is now like wax, any impression may be put upon him. There is not the most stiff-necked sinner, but if Christ put out his power, he can distil him into tears of repentance. (6.) *The sun hath a vegetative virtue*; it doth bring on the growth of plants, and flowers, and all vegetables; it draws the sap from the root into the branches, and makes it thrust out into buds, blossoms and fruit, and when the fruit is knit, it ripens and brings it on to perfection, see Deut. xxxiii. 14. and Job. viii. 16. *He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.* Though the soil be ever so good, and the husbandry ever so exact, yet without the sun, nothing comes to perfection; the fruitfulness of the earth is to be ascribed to the sun more than to the earth, or tillage; so Christ hath a vegetating virtue, he brings on the spiritual growth of every grace in the soul; did not this sun send down his beams, the spiritual plantation would come to nothing. The Scripture attributes all christian growth to Christ; he is the root which feeds grace, all supply comes from him. God hath stored all our nourishment in him, to be communicated as we stand in need, see Col. ii. 19. and Eph. iv. 16. and the text makes it one effect of Christ's rising upon the Saints. They shall grow up as the calves of the stall. You may thank Christ for the thriving of your graces, as well as for their planting, Joh. xv. 5. (7.) *The sun hath a purifying virtue.* When your garments are mouldy, you hang them out in the sun; or your rooms musty, you set open the windows to let in the sun, that they may be sweetened; so Christ hath a purifying virtue, he makes and keeps the heart sweet, see c. iii. 2, 3. he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap, &c. When the heart hath gathered any defilement, and grows mouldy and musty, there's no way to get

the ill savour out, but to bring it under the sun-shine of Jesus. (8.) *The sun hath an elevating virtue*, by its heat and power are many things exhaled and lifted up from the earth, which otherwise would lay there; many meteors and impressions are in the air, which were exhaled from the earth by the power of the sun; and Christ hath an elevating virtue, he exhales and raises the earthly hearts of men to heavenly things and meditations. The heart of man naturally is so deeply buried in the earth, that if Christ did not by his heat which he sends down in his ordinances lift it up, it would never have thought of heaven; he hath an attractive power to draw up the hearts of men to himself, Joh. xii. 32. It is from him that ever you had one serious thought of heaven or heavenly things, see Col. iii. 1, 2. The power of our spiritual resurrection at first is from Christ and it is his person that enables us to raise ourselves higher from day to day; did not Christ send down his exhaling power, we should lie like stones and never ascend, he descends and then we ascend.

III. *Christ is called the sun, to shew the clearness of the Gospel worship in contrast to the legal dispensation God used towards the Fathers.* This is Calvin's note upon the text; God did never shine so clearly to the sons of men, as in the person of Christ. The ceremonial law with all its appendages was but dark; gospel worship is clear. The law is like a shadow, Heb. x. 1. that was but moon or star-light, gospel worship is sun-light, 2 Cor. iii. 10. The patriarchs saw Christ, hoped in him and were saved by him, as well as we, but it was more darkly. In the gospel the heavens were opened wider than ever. God did never manifest himself so fully and clearly to the world, as he hath done by Jesus Christ, see Heb. i. 1. *polumeros polutropos*, also see Isa. lx. 1, 2, 19, 20. All former light was but like the dawning light of the morning, in respect of this mid-day light of the gospel. The gospel revelation is full and perfect, Joh. i. 18. God was declared before, but never so fully as by Christ. The Fathers looked for additions, but Christ brought to light the whole will of God. No further revelation is to be expected till we come to Heaven, 2 Pet. i. 19.

SERMON. XXVI. MAL. 4---2.

"The sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings."

SECONDLY, Christ is called the sun of righteousness in two respects.

I. *On account of himself.* He is the holy and just one ; he hath not nor ever shall have the least spot of unrighteousness in his own person ; he was born righteous and innocent. *That holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God*, Luk. i. 35. (*to agios*) that holy thing is more than *agios*, it hath the force of the abstract : and he lived and died righteous. Heb. vii. 26. *He was holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners.* He was without spot and guile, made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted. Satan himself, though the father of lies, and full of bitter enmity against Jesus Christ, is forced to give this testimony, that he is the holy one of God, Mar. i. 24. He could neither have redeemed himself from death, nor have saved us from the wrath of God, if he had not been perfectly righteous.

II. *Because of his elect ;* he is their righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. Jesus Christ is the believer's righteousness two ways. (1.) *In justification.* It is through the imputation of his righteousness unto them, that they are made righteous in the sight of God ; God looking upon them as invested with the righteousness of Christ, accounts them righteous, Rom. iii. 11, 22, 25, 26. All are unrighteous in themselves, and it is through him alone that they come to be righteous. (2.) *In sanctification.* See 1 Cor. i. 30. *Where God is made unto us, of God sanctification*, as well as righteousness ; he may be as truly called our righteousness of sanctification as well as of justification ; he is so in four respects. 1. *He is the meritorious cause of it*, Eph. v. 25, 26. Grace is as truly the purchase of Christ, as glory ; he hath bought holiness for us, as well as Heaven. Sanctification is no less the price of Christ's blood, than salvation. We are 1 Cor. i. 2. sanctified in Christ Jesus, (i.e.) on account saith *Piscator* of Christ's satisfaction. 2. *He is the material cause of it.* It is by his blood, that the filthiness of the soul is done away. Christ's blood is the soul's laver,

in which it is washed and made white, Heb. ix. 14. 3. *He is the exemplary cause of it.* Our sanctification is according to that copy or pattern of holiness, which is in Christ himself, see Joh. i. 16. As the print upon the wax, answers the engraving or stamp upon the seal; so doth the believer's holiness answer Christ's, not in degree and measure, but in kind and quality. 4. *He is the efficient cause of it.* 'Tis Christ that doth by his spirit through the ordinances work holiness in his Saints; he stubs up the roots of sin, and sets the roots of grace in the soul, 1 Cor. vi. 11., and it is he that doth preserve and carry it on from one degree to another, till it come to perfection. So that both in his own person, and in his elect, he is called the sun of righteousness.

In the third particular. Christ excels the natural sun in these eight particulars, viz.

I. *The natural sun shines in but one hemisphere at once.* Though it circuit about the earth in a little time, yet it doth not shine in all places at once. Yea, there are some parts of the world in which the sun doth not shine for many months together; though it be a great body, yet its wings are not large enough to compass the earth all at once, when it riseth to us, it sets to our antipodes: but Christ is able to shine over the whole earth at once. Though there be many parts of the world in which he never appeared, yet his wings are large enough to over-spread the whole earth. This sun of righteousness shines in *England* and in *America* and all the christian world over at the same moment of time. That which is said of the land of *Judea* concerning the King of *Assyria*, Isa. viii. 8. *That the stretching out of his wings should fill the breadth of the land*, is true of Christ in reference to the whole world. The stretching out of his wings are able to cover the breadth of the whole world at one moment.

II. *The natural sun gives light but not sight.* If a man want the benefit of seeing, he hath no more benefit by the sun for seeing, than if there were no sun at all. Let the sun-beams descend with greatest power upon a blind *Bartimeus* his eyes will not thereby be opened. But this sun of righteousness hath a power to give sight as well as light; in the days of flesh he opened the eyes of many that were naturally blind, you read of one Joh. ix. of two others, Mat. xx. 30, 34. And he doth still open the eyes of them

that are spiritually blind. It was he that by *Ananias* opened the eyes of *Saul*, Acts ix. 17. The truth is, no man doth ever spiritually see till the beams of this sun descend upon him, he is the spiritual day-spring that gives them power to see who are under the power of the gross darkness of sin and iniquity.

III. *The natural sun hath endamaging as well as healing qualities.* It is many times offensive and prejudicial both to men and fruits. (1.) It doth sully and deface the beautiful countenance of men, Cant. i. 6. If the eye of the sun do but look upon us directly, it changes the color of the face into a swarthy hue. (2.) Its hot beams sometimes by their vehement shining make men faint; when the sun beat upon the *head of Jonah*, he fainted, c. iv. 8. (3.) The fruits of the earth are many times scorched and withered to nothing by the violent heat of the sun, Mat. xiii. 6. If God withhold the rain, and send out the burning heat of the sun, the fruits of the earth mourn and languish. But Jesus Christ the sun of righteousness, hath no hurtful quality, his beams neither make the face black, nor the spirits faint; he ripens the fruit of grace in the soul, but never withers them, his beams are destructive to none but to such as will not suffer him to shine upon them. Those fruits that have no root, Christ withers, but where there is root and sap, the beams of Christ are never prejudicial. The sun hath a hardening virtue, but Christ never hardens any, unless by accident, because they will not suffer his beams to enter into their hearts. 'Tis rather the want of Christ's beams than their prescence, that occasions hardening in any heart.

IV. *The natural sun is the creature of this sun of righteousness.* Christ as he is God, made the sun that shines in the firmament, and put it into all its glory. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*, Joh. i. 3. He gave it both the light and heat which it gives to us; he hath set and appointed it the course which it runs, and hath run since its creation, and he doth by his providence order its setting and rising for the good of the world; he is the light of all the sun's light, and the fountain both of the being and preservation of all that influence, which the sun doth cause to descend upon the world. The dependance of the sun of righteousness is

upon himself, but the dependance of the natural sun is upon him.

V. *The natural sun doth communicate his light and heat equally to all.* He shines as much upon the house and lands of the wicked as upon the righteous. He doth impart and dispense his influences alike to all, in the same manner and measure, see Mat. v. 45 but it is not so with the sun of righteousness; he gives light and heat to one and not to another. Though all that live under the shining of the ordinances, do receive so much from him as is sufficient to leave them without excuse, yet doth he cause peculiar beams to fall upon the hearts of some which do not fall upon others. He shines upon one only to conviction, on another to conversion; upon the ears of some and into the hearts of others, 2 Cor. iv. 6. See *Paul* and his companions, Acts ix. 6, 7. they saw the light, and heard a voice too, a confused voice which they did not understand, and therefore, c. xxii. 9. *Paul* saith, *they heard not the voice of him that spake*, they heard an inarticulate sound, or a confused voice, but they knew neither who spake nor what was spoken, therefore they heard the voice, and yet heard it not; but *Paul* both heard the voice and understood it, and was converted by it, which we do not find recorded in any of the rest. Some common beams doth Christ cast forth upon all, but his special beams and influences are imparted to none but the elect. Nor is this any derogation to the freeness or fulness of Christ's grace, which consist more in the greatness of that he bestows, than in the multitude of them that enjoy the benefit. We read of hidden *Manna*, of a white stone and a new name which Christ gives to some and not to others, Rev. ii. 17. This sun of righteousness shines sometimes on one in a house, and leaves all the rest still in darkness.

VI. *The natural sun is an inanimate thing.* Though it be in some sense called the fountain of life, yet it is in itself without life; it hath neither rational, sensitive, nor vegetative life; and in this respect, the least living creature is more glorious than the sun; a living dog is better than an inanimate jewel; but Christ is a living sun. This sun of righteousness hath life as well as light and heat, Joh. i. 4. All that spiritual life which is in the soul, is communicated from and preserved by Christ; and the soul is dead till it

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be imbreathened by Jesus Christ. Hence it is that Christ is so often in Scripture called our life, as Col. iii. 3, 4. because he gives and maintains both the natural and spiritual life. Yea the brightest beam the soul ever had from Christ here, is but a glimpse, in respect of what shall be in Heaven. There he shall shine, (1.) Perpendicularly. (2.) In all his strength. (3.) Without over-casting.

VII. *The natural sun is the servant of men.* It is called *Shemesh* in the Hebrew, from a root that signifies to minister, because it is the great servant of the world in giving light. But Christ is not our servant, but our Lord, whom men and Angels must worship. It is gross idolatry to worship the natural sun, *Job* vindicates himself from it, c. xxxi. 26. *Josiah* demolished all sun-worship in his reformation, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. 'Tis idolatry to worship the sun, but it's gross impiety not to worship Christ, the very Angels of Heaven are commanded to worship him, Heb. i. 6.

VIII. *The natural sun is only useful for the time and state of this life.* Whether the heavens shall be abolished and annihilated at the day of judgment, or only renewed, is a great question amongst learned men. If they shall be only renewed (as they probably will be) yet they shall not be useful to men in that way they now are. The glorified bodies of the Saints have no need in Heaven, of the light of the sun to shine upon them, as now they have, Rev. xx. 5. The Saints in Heaven shall be above the shining of ordinances, and of the natural sun. Every glorified body *shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* They shall be farther above the sun, than the sun is now above them. But the sun of righteousness is useful in Heaven, the Saints shall have the benefit of Christ's shining upon them for ever and ever; he shall cast his beams upon the soul and body glorified for ever, Rev. vii. 17. All the glory of Heaven is communicated to the Saints through him. The uses of these are. (1.) Information. (2.) Exhortation. (3.) Consolation.

I. For information. It teaches us four lessons. 1. *Behold from hence the glory of the gospel.* The Apostle calls it (*to euangelion tes doxes*) the glorious gospel, or the gospel of glory, 1 Tim. 1. 11. The gospel is exceedingly full of glory; there's nothing in it but what is very glorious; it is enough to proclaim the glory of it, that in it Christ is

discovered: the gospel is the orb in which the sun of righteousness shineth, the chariot in which Christ rides, and the golden vessel which carries this glorious light about the world. The gospel is the true *Bethshemesh*, or house of the sun; it is called the word of Christ, Col. iii. 16.; because by this word he is discovered and manifested to the world. *David* admires the heavens because in them, God hath set a tabernacle for the sun, Psl. xix. 4. The gospel is that glorious tabernacle which God hath set and established for this great sun of righteousness; where it is not, Christ is not known, remove the gospel, and Christ the sun of righteousness is totally removed. 2. *The exceeding great glory of Heaven.* The scripture makes mention of Heaven, as of a glorious place. Amongst other things this shews its glory; that this sun of righteousness shines in it, Rev. xxi. 23. and xxii. 3. This will further appear from Christ's superior shining in Heaven, above his shining on earth. I will instance three particulars. (1.) *In Heaven Christ shines upon the soul immediately.* There is nothing to interpose between him and the soul; his shinings in this life are mediate through the ordinances. We see his beams through the thick glass of ordinances, Cant. ii. 9. We have his beams here only by reflection, but in Heaven they are immediately darted down upon the soul. There is no temple but Christ himself in Heaven, Rev. xxi. 22. Now if the mediate beamings of Christ upon the soul be so glorious, what abundant glory will there be in his immediate shinings! (2.) *In Heaven he shines with his full strength upon the soul.* All on earth have but small beams of this sun; a beam in one ordinance, and a beam in another; here a little, and there a little, as we are able to bear it: the eye of the soul while it is unglorified, is not able without dazzling to look upon Jesus shining in his full strength, *Thou shalt see my back parts but my face cannot be seen*, Exod. xxxiii. 22, 23. but in Heaven the soul shall be able to take a full view of Christ's face, 1 Cor. xii. 12. All that ever we have seen of him in this world, will be but darkness compared to that full sight of his glory we shall have in Heaven. (3.) *In Heaven Christ shines without intermission.* The soul here doth often lose Christ's face; every day is not a sun-shine day. There are some dark and gloomy days even to them that have the greatest interest in Christ, Isa. l. 10. but in Heaven the sun is always up; there are no

clouds to eclipse the light of his face in that region; there's no night in Heaven, Rev. xvii. 25. That which causes the soul here to lose the sight of Christ, shall not in Heaven: no sin enters into that holy place. If the immediate, perfect, uninterrupted shining of Christ can make a place glorious, Heaven is a most glorious place. 3. *The miserable condition of those that have no interest in Jesus Christ*; it is the top of all misery, see Eph. ii. 12. How uncomfortable would the world be if there were no sun; If God had not made the sun, the world would have been but an uncomfortable prison. What a muse and astonishment are men put into when the sun is eclipsed but for a few hours. How doleful is their condition upon whom the sun of righteousness hath never risen! They have neither spiritual light, nor warmth, nor healing, nor softness that are without Christ; they want both the righteousness of justification, and of sanctification, who have not a saving interest in this sun of righteousness; and none stand in more need both of your compassions and prayers than those that want Jesus Christ, who are so much more the miserable, because they want eyes to see their misery. 4. *That there is no righteousness either of justification or sanctification without Christ*, he is called the sun of righteousness in both these respects, and therefore till he arise upon the soul, it hath no righteousness in either sense. *For the righteousness of justification.* The Papists teach and maintain, that a person must have in himself inherent righteousness to justify him before God's tribunal. They say that Christ's righteousness is not the proper cause of justification, but that whereby God is pleased to accept of the habits of righteousness in us, placing the matter of justification either in something habitually inherent in us, or flowing from us. This doctrine divests Christ of the name "*The Lord our righteousness.*" Jer. xxiii. 6. If he be our righteousness, then we are not our own righteousness. *I would not be found*, saith a good Divine, *in the righteousness of the best prayers I ever made, at the day of judgment.* To take off men from this popish doctrine, I shall lay down these arguments against it. (1.) *The righteousness of God, and the righteousness of men are opposed in Scripture as things inconsistent in the matter of justification*, Phil. iii. 9. To mingle these two together, were to wear a garment of linen and woolen, which God forbade in his law; he that submits to the one, cannot

to the other, Rom. x. 3. he that trusts to the righteousness of man, cannot to the righteousness of God. Our righteousness is that which we do in obedience to the law, but Christ's is that by which we are reckoned righteous in the sight of God. (2.) *If righteousness be by works then it is not of free grace but of debt*, see Rom. xi. 6. The Papists answer this, understanding by works there, the works of nature and unregeneracy only, and not in works flowing from faith; but this is false, for the Apostle proves, Rom. iv. 2. that works flowing from faith, cannot justify before God *Abraham* was regenerate, his works flowed from faith, yet were not his righteousness but Christ apprehended by faith. (3.) *That righteousness by which and for which a person is justified, must exactly answer God's justice*. It must be so every way perfect, that justice itself can require no more, but the best of our works are imperfect and defective; they are so in our sight, much more in the sight of God, Isa. lxiv. 6. Not only our unrighteousness, but our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; Psl. cxxx. 3. *David* was a man after God's own heart, yet doth he acknowledge that if God should weigh iniquity none should stand. *Job* had a very high testimony from God, c. ix. 3, 15, 20, 30, 31. *Nehemiah* did many good works, yet he comes for mercy, c. xiii. 22. (4.) *This doctrine makes a man his own justifier*, which is contrary to Scripture, which ascribes the work of justification to God, Rom. iii. 26. and Rom. viii. 33. To make man's work the cause of his justification, is to make him a justifier, which is the work of God alone. (5.) *This doctrine makes the merit and sacrifice of Christ either needless or insufficient*, Gal. ii. ult.; to affirm either of these is a great wickedness: to say it was needless, is to make God cruel to his son. Why should he pour out his blood if there was no necessity of it? To say it is insufficient, is to vilify his person, and to contradict scripture which saith, he is able to save to the uttermost. (6.) *This doctrine establisheth boasting*. Now the great design of God in justification, is to exclude boasting, Rom. iii. 27. The law of works lays a foundation of boasting, but the law of faith excludes it. (7.) *This doctrine robs the soul of all consolation, and leaves it unsettled and perplexed*. A man can never be free from troubles that builds the hopes of his justification upon himself, Rom. x. 6, 7. The scope of the Apostle in that place is to put a difference between the righteousness of the law,

and of faith. Amongst others this is one, the righteousness of faith settles the heart; it saith not, who shall ascend, &c.? It knows Christ hath ascended and descended, that he hath done and suffered all, and so quiets the conscience. He that trusts to his own righteousness can never be settled, but will be still disputing; and therefore the Papists who cry up justification by their own works, cry down assurance of salvation; and they cannot do otherwise, for justification by our own righteousness, and assurance of salvation are inconsistent. Thus I have proved the righteousness of justification to be from Christ. 2. *For the righteousness of sanctification.* This is also from Christ, he that is without Christ, is without sanctification. Till this sun be risen upon the soul, there is no holiness in it. A Christless condition is an unsanctified state. A man must prove himself interested in Christ, before he can assert his sanctification; we are said to be sanctified in Christ, 1 Cor. i. 2. and must thank Christ as well for the righteousness of sanctification, as of justification. Till these beams shine upon you, you have no grace in you.

II. For exhortation. 1. To all in general. 2. To the Christless. 3. To the christian.

I. To all men in general; I recommend two things. 1. *Bless God for Jesus Christ.* We have great cause to bless God for the light of the sun, innumerable are those benefits we receive by this creature; 'tis our guide, and our life, by its influences nature is revived, the body is cheered and all things useful for our life are refreshed; the world had been an *Egypt* for darkness, a *wilderness* for barrenness, and an *Hospital of diseases*; if God had not made the sun, the beauty of the creation would have been hid, and its benefit have been lost, if this lump of Heaven had not been hung out; yet much more cause have we to bless God for his mystical sun, Eph. i. 3. This will be the work of Heaven to all eternity; had not this sun from Heaven visited us, our condition had been as miserable as the state of devils. 2. *Never see the sun but meditate on Jesus Christ.* A spiritual christian may learn very much divinity from the works of creation. Though the whole book of creation without the gospel, could not have made Christ known to the world, for the philosophers turned over every page of that great book, but could spell nothing of Christ out of it;

yet now we that have the gospel, may help our knowledge of Christ by the book of creation. Christ is resembled to so many creatures, that we can hardly see any one but it preacheth something of him : when your eyes behold the light of the sun, or when you feel its warmth, or perceive its influences upon the creatures, then think on Christ. The sun in the firmament will rise up in judgment against us that have Christ revealed in the gospel as a sun, if we do not fill our hearts with daily thoughts of him.

II. To the Christless. I have only one thing to press upon them, *That they would endeavour that this sun may shine upon them ; yea, that it may shine into them.* Be not contented to live without it. I know it will be said, what shall we do that Christ may arise upon our hearts. 1. *Be sensible of your want of Christ.* He that sees and bewails his own darkness, will hardly die without light. One reason why Christ doth not shine upon us, is because we think we have light in ourselves, we think we saw Christ without the sun, therefore we are suffered to walk in blindness, Joh. ix. 39. 2. *Stand in those places where the sun usually shines.* He that would have the sun shine upon him, must not keep in dark cellars and vaults, but come into the open air. The ordinary place of Christ's shining, is where his gospel is preached ; it is the East, where this sun ariseth, 2 Cor. iv. 4, 6. The gospel is the orb of this sun ; he that constantly waits here, will at last feel the warm beams of Christ coming down upon him, especially if he make it his design to enjoy the beams of Christ in his gospel. 3. *Take heed of shutting your eyes when the sun begins to appear.* He that shuts his eyes will never see the sun, though it shine in all its brightness. Stand with your eyes open, yea, with your eyes fixed, looking for Christ's appearing, and he will cause his beams at last to fall upon you.

III. To you on whom this sun hath arisen. I have these things to recommend to you. 1. *Walk as the children of the light.* Put away darkness, ignorance, blindness, and be full of spiritual light. God may well expect light from those on whom Christ hath shined. Stumbling in a child of God, is worse than falling in another man. If you be ignorant of God's will, or your duty, you are inexcusable, because the sun of light is risen upon you, Isa. vi. 1. Eph.

iv. 17, to 20. 2. *Get and keep spiritual warmth in your hearts.* The sun hath an heating virtue: coldness of spirit is a temper unbefitting a child of God. If a man be cold in winter, when the sun is at a great distance, 'tis more excusable; but to be cold when the summer-sun shines hot upon him, argues great distemper. To be luke-warm when Christ is risen upon you, is inexcusable. Christ expects heat and fervency from you in all your duties; hot love, hot devotion, fervency of spirit in the service of God is expected from you, Rom. xii. 11. You will shame the beams of Christ, if you have not a holy warmth in all your services, *My heart* (saith David) *was hot within me*, Ps. xxxix. 3. A cold hearted christian shames the sun. 3. *Be very fruitful.* The sun hath a fructifying virtue, it ripens every thing. Christians must be careful that their graces be ripened; raw, lean, weak graces shame the beams of Christ; you must be sure to grow in grace to perfect holiness, 2 Cor. vii. 1. 4. *Keep your souls sweet.* The sun hath a sweetening virtue. A mouldy musty heart disparageth Christ, you must be as the smell of a field which God hath blessed. 5. *Be raised up to affection in heavenly things.* The sun hath an exhaling virtue. Christians must be higher than others, Rev. xii. 1. 6. *Nourish spiritual softness.* The sun hath a mollifying virtue. A hard frozen heart is a shame to Christ. *David's heart* was like melting wax, Ps. xxii. 14. *Josiah's heart* was tender, 2 Kings xxii. 19. A frown from God, an angry word from God, must melt a christian's heart. If your hearts be hard, Christ may justly draw his beams from you; if the sun of righteousness doth not melt you, it is because you are clay, not wax.

III. For consolation. Great comfort ariseth here to the godly. 1. *Against spiritual darkness.* Sometimes God's people see neither sun nor stars, Isa. l. 10. Well, be comforted, Christ is the sun of righteousness, he will arise and scatter all those black mists that trouble you; your sun is not set, it is only eclipsed, the light of it will shine again. 2. *Against all your own unrighteousness.* The servants of God find much unrighteousness and guilt in themselves, by which they are cast down and go heavily. Well, remember Christ is a sun of righteousness; as full of righteousness as the sun is of light, and his righteousness is for thy benefit. 'Tis as much thine, as if it were thine own. 3. *Against the want of sublunary comforts.* God's people have often

but little of these things. Well, yet the sun is up, what folly to complain for want of moon-light or star-light when the sun shines ! If God hath clothed you with the sun, the want of moon and stars may well be endured.

SERMON XXVII. CANT, 1—3.

“Thy name is as an ointment poured forth.”

THE scope of the Holy Ghost in this song, is to discover the exceeding great love between Christ and his Church ; we may see here, them as it were striving who should express their love to each other most, *v. 2.* the Church passionately desires to be made partaker of further communion of Christ ; *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. Those who have once tasted of the sweetness of Christ's love, are exceedingly carried out after a further degree of it.* The reason of this passionate desire is, *v. 2, 3.* from the sweetness of his love ; this is set out by a double comparison. (1.) *His love is better than wine, v. 2.* (2.) It's more desirable than *precious ointments*, see beginning of *v. 3.* *Because of the savour of thy good ointments*, and amplified in the text, *Thy name is as ointment poured forth.* The words are a proposition, in which we have, (1.) The subject ; *Thy name.* (2.) The Prædicate ; *Ointment poured forth.* By the name of Christ, some understand the doctrine of the gospel ; so *Ainsworth*, by his name (saith he) is meant the doctrine of grace, the law of faith. This is sometimes called his name, as, *The Isles shall wait for his law*, *Isa. xlii. 4.* ; which is expounded, *In his name shall the Gentiles trust*, *Mat. xii. 21.* ; and it is most certain that his law is far more sweet than the most precious ointment. But yet by his name here, we are to understand his person as set forth in the gospel, *Mat. x. 22.* *Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.* *Acts ix. 16.* *I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake*, that is, for my sake.

Doct. That Christ is like ointment poured forth. He is a spiritual ointment ; his name both in the Hebrew and

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Greek signifies anointing, or anointed; he is called in Dan. ix. 26. Messiah, which the *Septuagint* render *Chrisma*, anointing: the Prophet Isa. c. x. 27. calls him the anointing. It is reported by Historians, that at the birth of Christ a fountain of oil suddenly sprung up in *Rome* and flowed for a day and a night together; our Annotators mention it in their exposition of this text. The oils or ointments used in sundry cases under the ceremonial law, were some way or other typical of Christ the true ointment. I shall open these four things by way of explication.

I. In what respects Christ is compared to ointment.

II. Why to ointment poured forth.

III. How this ointment is poured forth.

IV. How Christ excels all other ointments.

I. For the first. 1. *Christ is ointment because of that divine unction wherewith he was anointed by God.* The Scripture makes mention of his being anointed with the graces of the spirit as our Mediator. This was typified by the anointing of the Priests under the law, especially of the High-Priest; you may read at large of the holy ointment, and of the anointing, Exod. xxx. 23, 24, 25, 30. It was also typified by the anointing of Kings and Prophets. *Elisha* was anointed to the office of a Prophet, 1 Kings xix. 16. and *David* as King, 1 Sam. xvi. 1. All these were types of Christ, the great King, Prophet, and Priest of his church; the anointing oil did typify the graces of the spirit; the anointing with that oil, did typify Christ's anointing with the Holy Ghost, Isa. lxi. i. This *Peter* mentioned in his sermon, Acts x. 38. *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power.* Now this ointment was shed upon the Lord Jesus in such great plenty, that he may well be called by the name of ointment, Psl. xlv. 7. he had more of this poured upon his human nature, than all the Saints together: the spirit was not given him by, but above measure, Joh. iii. 34. he was from his conception filled with the Holy Ghost; was full of grace and truth, Joh. i. 14. he had not only drops, but whole rivers of oil poured upon his head; and may be called ointment from that abundance wherewith he was filled; his God-head anointed the manhood with an unspeakable fulness, Col. i. 19.

2. *Christ is ointment in regard of the excellent virtues which are in him; he hath all the good properties of ointment;*

I name five. *Ointment is very odoriferous.* Precious ointments yields a very sweet smell. When the woman in the gospel had poured her box of ointment upon the head of Christ, *the whole house was filled with odour of it*, Joh. xii. 3. Christ is very odoriferous, he is sweet in himself, and exceedingly sweet in the smell of his saints; the perfume in the law was a type of him, Exod. xxx. 34. he perfumes all persons and places wherever he comes, if but one drop of Christ be poured upon the soul, the whole soul is perfumed with its smell. When Christ had only put his finger into the hole of the door, the hand of the spouse was perfumed as with sweet smelling myrrh! Cant. v. 5. That soul wants its spiritual smelling which doth not find a sweetness in Jesus Christ. Every thing in him is very fragrant. *There is a fragrancy in his person.* He is a bundle of precious myrrh. Cant. i. 13. His life and holy conversation yielded a sweet smell in the world Psl. xlv. 8. *All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia.* The graces of the spirit, of which his life was full; his righteousness, meekness, piety, patience, what a smell do they cast abroad in the gospel to this very day. *There is a fragrancy in his death.* His death was a sweet savour unto God, Eph v. 2. his dead body was embalmed with sweet spices, Joh. xix. 39. not that he had need of such, for his body never saw corruption, Psl. xvi. 10. So fragrant was the death of Christ, that he bath perfumed the grave, and made it as a bed of roses to all the Saints. *There is a sweet fragrancy in his intercession,* it perfumes Heaven itself, see it typified under the law, Lev. xvi. 12, 13. The odours of the sweetest incense are not so fragrant to man, as the odours of Christ's intercession are to God, which is so fragrant, that the services of his people, which are unsavory in themselves, come up as a cloud of incense before the Lord; Cant. iii. 6. it's spoken of the church because it's the feminine gender. All this sweetness is, because they are perfumed with the incense of Christ's mediation. *There is a fragrancy in the word of Christ.* The breath of Christ's mouth is sweeter than any perfume in the world; Cant. v. 16. his mouth or palate is sweetnesses, in the original; all his promises, and precepts are very savory. *There is a fragrancy in all his ordinances.* Prayer, sacraments, preaching, singing of psalms, are in themselves and to a gracious heart, like a sweet smelling ointment, see Cant. ii. 3. No such sweet air blow-

eth under Heaven as in the church of God, where the ordinances of Christ are dispensed in power and purity. In one word, there is nothing of Christ but is more sweet than the best ointment ever compounded by man. *Ointment hath an exhilarating virtue*, it cheers the spirits, and makes the heart glad, Prov. xxvii. 9. *Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart*. When Solomon exhorts men to a cheerful life, he mentions ointment; let thy head want no ointment; alluding to the custom of the ancients, who in their banquetings and feastings used such signs of joy, and Amos expressing the joviality of those epicures, c. vi. 6. saith, *They anoint themselves with the chief ointments*. Also Christ hath a cheering virtue; and the heart of a sinner is never truly merry, till it be anointed with the graces and comforts of Christ; who is the only remover of spiritual heaviness; the only cure for spiritual melancholy, Mat. xi. 28. All spiritual refreshing is from Jesus; he was anointed with the oil of gladness, that he might work gladness in the hearts of others, Isa. lxi. 3. There's not one drop of the oil of joy, but what comes out of this great olive-tree, Jesus; the gladness which doth not proceed from Christ, and not bottomed on him, is worldly madness, not true joy: he is the consolation of *Israel*, Luk. ii. 25. He hath laid the foundation of *Israel's* comfort, and he conveys to them all their comfort. *Ointment hath a mollifying virtue*. If there be any hard tumour or swelling upon the body, we use ointment to soften it. The Holy Ghost alludes to this, Isa. i. 6. where speaking of the state diseases, he saith, *they have not been mollified with ointments*. Jesus hath a mollifying virtue, let a heart of Adamant be but once anointed with this ointment, and it becomes a heart of flesh. It was by this that the hard heart of *Manasseh* was softened; God by his spirit chafed this ointment into it, and it became tender; and it is by the application of this unction through the spirit of God, that the stony hearts of sinners are softened from day to day. Thou that hast now a tender heart, wouldest have carried thy stony heart with thee to thy grave, if this precious ointment had not been spread upon it. *Ointment is of a shining nature*: Those Virgins prepared for the *Persian King*, used divers ointments to make themselves beautiful, Est. ii. 12. they used six months sweet odours, and six months oil of myrrh. This oil as those who write of it say, had an abstersive

virtue, it helped to get wrinkles out of the skin, and so to beautify the face and make it bright. *Naomi* therefore bids *Ruth*, when she sends her to *Bouz* to anoint herself, *Ruth* iii. 3. and *David* speaking of oil, saith, it *makes the face to shine*, Psl. civ. 15. Warriors of old, that they might make their armour glisten, and so render themselves formidable to their enemies, used to anoint them with oil, Isa. xxi. 5. *Arise you Princes and anoint the shield*. Christ hath a brightening virtue: as he is bright and beautiful in his own person, Psl. xlv. 2. so he makes his people beautiful; he is very bright in himself; there is no scar, no spot, no deformity in him. That which was said of *Absolom*, is much more true of Christ, 2 Sam. xiv. 25. Though men that are blind see no beauty in him, as the Prophet complained long since, Isa. liii. 3. yet in the eyes of God, of Angels and of Saints, he is singularly beautiful; and as he is bright in himself, so doth he beautify others. All the wrinkles of sin, all the spots of the soul, are done away by this ointment; which, if it be spread upon the soul, turns blacks into *Nazarites*. All the brightness of the Saints is from hence, Ezek. x. 14. *Thou wast comely through my comeliness which I put upon thee*. Hereby the old wrinkles of original sin, which are as so many deep furrows upon the soul, and the latter spots of actual sin are taken away, as if they had not been. See Cant. iv. init. Cant. vii. init. all this beauty is acquired by the application of this beautifying ointment. Christ is the church's golden anointing pot: he that would have these spots removed, must daily drop this ointment upon his soul; which if applied by faith, will fetch off the red spots of cruelty, the black spots of discontent, the blue spots of envy, the heat spots of passion, and will put a shining lustre upon the soul. *Ointment hath a healing virtue*. The *Samaritan* poured into the wounded man *wine and oil*, Luk. x. 34. Wine for cleansing, and oil for healing. Surgeons make much use of ointment. Search the dispensatory for the truth of this; and Christ hath a healing virtue. If the spiritual wounds of the soul, though they have been of long continuance, be anointed with this ointment, they are in a short time finally healed. Christ himself was that *Samaritan*, his blood the wine that cleansed, and the oil that healed those desperate wounds. There is no other *balm in Gilead* besides this ointment that can cure

the least sore upon the inward man, without its application you will certainly die in your sins.

II. Christ is compared to ointment poured forth in three respects. 1. *To shew his communicativeness*; he is ready to make distributions unto his people of all that grace and goodness which is in him, he doth not keep his grace and virtue within himself, but lets it drop down upon his members; the box of ointment stands continually open that his elect may take out of it according as they stand in need, the ointment which was poured upon the head of *Aaron* at his consecration, *ran down to the very skirts of his clothing*, Psl. cxxxiii. 2.; this was to typify the communicativeness of Christ; he hath received the ointment of the spirit, not for himself, but that he might anoint all his members, and he is very mindful of the trust reposed in him, he received it for his members and is willing they should receive it from him Joh. i. 6. Many are willing to have the patrimony of others poured into their treasury, but they not to pour out again; but Christ, as he is willing God should pour out grace into him, so is he as willing to pour it out upon us. 2. *To shew his exceeding fulness*. Christ hath so much that he can spare for others. 'Tis poured out and yet it doth not decay, there is in him an undecayable fulness; he is like the *widows cruse of oil*, 2 Kings, iv. 6. never leaves running, till the soul wants a vessel to receive it. 3. *Because the fragrancy and other excellent virtues of ointment are best discovered in the pouring of it forth*. Ointment in the vessel doth neither smell nor shine so as when its poured out; the excellency of Christ lies in the using of him when he comes to pour out his graces, then; and not till then do we find the sweetness of them. *Taste and see that the Lord is gracious*, Psl. xxxiv. 8. the graciousness of Christ is not apprehended till it be tasted.

III. How Christ is poured forth. The great and ordinary way of pouring forth this name, *is by the divine ordinances of preaching, prayer and sacraments*, these are the means of pouring forth Christ, these are as the *Alabaster box* wherein this precious ointment is kept; you read in Zech. iv. 2, 3. of a golden candlestick with two olive trees standing by it, &c. the olive tree is Christ, the candlestick the church, the lamps the members of Christ, the pipes which convey the oil to the lamps, are the means of grace; Christ fills the

pipes which carry the oil to the lamps. The ordinances are the golden cruse in which the oil is kept, and by which it is diffused to every particular saint as he hath need. The preaching of the gospel is called the bearing of his name before the gentiles, Acts ix. 15. which when preached and the ordinances dispensed, then is the ointment poured forth. See 2 Cor, ii. 14. *Thanks be unto God which maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.* He that would smell the savour of Christ's ointment must wait, conscionably upon the ordinances, these are the consecrated pipes through which the oil runs. 'Tis true the spirit of Christ fills the pipes and makes them effectual to the saved, but yet the ordinances are instrumental. Every prayer, sermon or sacrament, conveys a drop of this ointment to the soul. He that turns away his face from the ordinances, makes himself incapable of tasting the ointments of Christ.

SERMON XXVII. CANT. 1---3

"Thy name is as an ointment poured forth."

FOURTHLY, how Christ excels other ointments; I shall open this in five particulars. 1. *He excels all other ointments in worth and value.* Some are of great value, but none are comparable to Christ. That which *Mary poured* upon the head of Christ, is said to be very costly, Joh. xii. 3. and yet it was valued at but three hundred Roman pence v. 2. but Jesus is of invaluable worth. All the gold, silver pearls and diamonds in the world are not worth the least drop of this ointment. He that hath it would not part with one drop for ten thousand rivers of oil, he that wants it, cannot purchase it for all the riches of the world; one drop of this is worth a sea of other ointments. 2. *He excels all other ointments in duration.* Their virtue may be lost. Take the most fragrant ointment in the world, keep it with ever so much care, yet it will corrupt in time. Other accidents may corrupt it. *Solomon* saith Eccl. x. 1. *Dead flies cause the ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking savour.* The best ointment ever compounded by the art of man may lose its savour, and

be offensive, but Christ is incorruptible ointment, he can never lose his savour, no time can putrify him, no accident corrupt him. This ointment hath continued ever since the promise made to *Adam*, Gen. iii. 15. yet its virtue in every respect, is as precious as at first ; his name is as glorious, as fragrant, as beautiful, as shining now, as when the alabaster box was first opened. The *Psalmist* speaks of this very expressively, Ps. lxxii. 17. *His name shall endure for ever, his name shall be continued as long as the sun, all nations shall call him blessed.* 3. *He excels all other ointments in his fulness.* Other ointment is of a wasting nature, take but one dram out of the largest vessel, and there is an abatement ; but this doth not grow less by spending. Christ hath anointed thousands of his elect in all past ages, and yet the vessel is as full, as if one drop had not been taken out of it. This olive tree hath been emptying itself for many years, into the golden bowl, and yet it continues running with as full a stream as it did the very first day. 4. *He excels all other ointments in virtue and operation, because he anoints the soul as well as the body.* Other ointments are poured only upon the outward man ; the soul, the conscience is not the better for the abundance poured upon the body ; the face of a person may shine with ointment, and yet his soul be black and filthy ; but this reacheth to the conscience and inward man, yea, it is principally for the inward man, Joh. ii. 27. the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you. Other ointments are outward that abide upon us, but this is inward which abideth in us. *This hath the good properties of all ointments ;* some are fragrant to the smell, but not healing ; others are healing, but not sweet. No one kind of ointment hath all excellencies in it ; but in Jesus Christ all excellencies concur, the good properties of every ointment center in Christ, he is equally excellent every way. *This ointment changes the very nature of the person upon whom it is poured.* Other ointments cannot change a person from what he is, or make a sinner a saint ; but Christ changeth the nature of persons. If this ointment be poured upon the head of a sinner, he is immediately a saint, if it fall upon a dead man, he becomes a living one : if a drop fall upon a weed, it is presently turned into a flower : when it was poured on *Saul*, he became a *Paul*, from a persecutor, he was changed into a preacher of the gospel ; it converts a filthy sepulchre into a curious garden,

an Ethiopian into a Nazarite as white as snow. *This ointment upon whomsoever it is poured abides for ever.* A person may soon lose all the scent and savor of material ointment, as if he had never been anointed; but if Christ do but drop one drop of this ointment upon the soul of an infant, he carries the savor of it with him to his grave, 1 Joh. ii. 27. The unction which ye have received of him abideth in you; its scent may be very weak in the children of God, but it can never be quite lost. *David* once by his sin had brought such an ill savor upon his soul, that the smell of the holy ointment was almost lost: *My wounds stink and are corrupt through my foolishness,* Psl. xxxviii. 5. yet after a while the fragrantcy of his ointment overcame the ill savor of his sin. The soul and body may, but Christ and the soul cannot be separated. *This ointment hath a present efficacy upon the soul.* The effects wrought by other ointments are not so suddenly performed. Ointment heals, but not in a moment, it makes the face smooth and clear, but it must have time to work. The Virgins which were to stand before the *Persian King*, must be anointed six months before their beauty was perfect, Est. ii. 12. hard swellings are mollified by it, but not at one dressing. Whatever operation the best ointment hath, it requires a convenient time to accomplish it; but whatever is done upon the soul by this, is done in a moment; as soon as the application is made, the effect follows. *The smallest quantity of this ointment is as effectual as the greatest.* A little of other ointment doth little or no good; a drop will not cure a wound; a small quantity will not perfume a great room; a drop or two will not supple a hard tumour; but one drop of this spiritual ointment is as effectual as a whole ocean. One drop softens the heart, and perfumes the soul. There is infinite virtue in every drop of Christ: he that is made partaker of any part of him, hath the merit of all Christ: as our Saviour told *Peter* in another case, Joh. xiii. 10. he that is washed need not to wash, save his feet. He that hath the least measure of this ointment, shall as certainly find all its effects as if he had the whole vessel poured upon him. 5. *He excels all other ointments in the manner of composition.* They are called the ointments of the Apothecary, Eccl. x. i. God created the materials, and gave man skill and understanding how to use them, yet the composition is made by men; but this precious ointment

is not of men, but by God, he only hath compounded it. It was God that anointed Christ with the holy unction of the spirit, Psl. lxxv. 7. and designed him to be ointment unto others. Yea, the truth is, this ointment is God himself. Though the humanity be a creature, the divinity is the creator. Christ is not only the ointment of God, but that which is God himself.

The Uses. (1.) From the general doctrine. (2.) From the particular resemblances.

First, in general. We may take notice of, 1. *The excellency of Christ.* He is compared in Scripture to all things that are necessary, pleasant, and delightful. To know what Christ is in himself, and what he is to us, comprehends a very great part of a Christian's study in this life. *Paul desired to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified,* 1 Cor. ii. 2. This one resemblance shews him to be a precious one, he is so excellent, that all the choice things in nature are made use of to shadow out his glory. *His Name shall be called wonderful,* Isa. ix. 6. How wonderful is that name which is composed of so many excellent things. 2. *This should draw our hearts exceedingly towards Jesus.* It should beget in us desire after, and delight in him. Precious ointments draw the affections of men towards them; the best is but a drug to Jesus. If not enamoured with him, we despise him. He that looks on him as ointment, cannot but be greatly delighted in him. It follows in the text, *Therefore do the Virgins love thee, draw me, we will run after thee.* That man doth not value Christ as ointment, that doth not love him and desire to be drawn after him. 3. *This shews the excellency of grace.* 'Tis the graces of the spirit in Christ that likens him to ointment; his sweet ointments are his meekness, patience, holiness, and every heavenly grace. True grace, is compared to the choicest things in all the world, Cant. iv. 13, 14. Next to God, Christ, and the spirit, there's nothing in Heaven or earth comparable to grace. 4. *This shews that the grace of Christ is not a thing common to all.* His common graces are communicated to all; his special grace is more confined; his name is ointment. The holy ointment in the law was poured upon none but consecrated things and persons, Exod. xxx. 23, &c. It must not be poured on man's flesh, v. 32. Christ is compared here to this ointment. A select number; the elect,

God's spiritual Priests only, are made partakers of Christ and his graces.

Secondly, particularly. First, from the fragrancy of Christ, we may learn. 1. *How unsavory are they that want Christ.* Wicked men's souls keep their bodies sweet, but what have they to keep their souls sweet? the Holy Ghost compares natural men to that which is most unsavory, Psl. xiv. 3. they are unsavory both in their persons and services. A heart unanointed casts the worst smell of any corrupt thing in the world. 2. *Acknowledge from whence all your fragrancy proceeds.* If your souls have any good smell, it is because this ointment hath been poured forth upon you. Cant. iv. 10, 11. and indeed every believer is a sweet savor unto God. The precious graces of Christ poured upon your head at your conversion, is the only reason of this good savor, and 'tis great pride and ingratitude not to own it. 3. *This teacheth how to make and keep the soul sweet.* Satan labors to make it musty, by breathing the ill air of sin into it, and if you would have it smell sweetly, you must anoint it with this ointment every day. Prayer, meditation, or some other holy duty, will preserve it sweet, notwithstanding the thick fogs of sin and temptation. Carry Christ in your bosom, and you will smell very sweet in every company. 4. *Whenever you smell any sweet savor think on Christ.* The best use we can make of perfumes and ointments, is to make them remembrancers of him who perfumes both earth and Heaven. And then, from the cheering virtue of this ointment, learn two things. 1. *Whither to go for heart reviving.* When you find your spirits dull and melancholy, smell this precious ointment, and it will revive you. It's Christ's work to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite. 2. *Let them that have this ointment maintain spiritual cheerfulness.* God calls for it, as well as sorrow, Phil. iii. 1. A well grounded cheerfulness honors religion as much as holiness. The Scripture was written for consolation, as well as conversion, Joh. xv. 11. Rom. xv. 4. The spirit is a comforter, as well as a sanctifier, Joh. xv. 26. You that have this ointment, maintain a holy light-heartedness. There is a vain, sinful, and sensual mirth; avoid these, but holy mirth must be kept up. It's a disparagement to the holy ointment, to see anointed ones droop in the blackest seasons. And from the

mollifying virtue of this ointment, learn 1. *The Scripture remedy against hardness of heart.* It's a disease the best more or less feel; chafe this suppling ointment to it, and it will grow soft; this was never used aright, but it eventually removed the spiritual hardness of the soul. 2. *Ascribe all heart softness to Christ.* Had not this dropt upon it, it had still been stony. From the beautifying virtue of this ointment, learn 1. *What true beauty is.* To be anointed with Christ; filled with his graces, and made partaker of the divine nature, this is true, lasting beauty, beauty that will commend us to God. 'Tis not he that hath the beautiful face, but the beautiful soul, that is accepted of God. 2. *He that would be beautiful let him anoint himself with Christ.* How vain are persons in painting their faces; Jezebel's daughters abound, 2 Kings ix. 30. as if they would mend God's workmanship; it was formerly whores customs, Ezek. xxiii. 40. Anoint yourselves once with this ointment, and all others will be unpleasant. From the healing quality of this ointment, learn 1. *To acknowledge how your sores were healed.* Thou wast full of wounds, now they are bound up and healed. Bless God for this balsam of Heaven, otherwise thou hadst died of thy wounds. 2. *Get this ointment into your houses.* Wise men will not be without healing ointment in their houses, especially where they are far from Surgeons. All our houses by reason of sin, are no better than spiritual hospitals: There's nothing can heal, but this divine balm; get your vessels filled with this ointment, and all will be well; pray that God would pour it into your wounded children and servants, else they are but dead men.

SERMON XXVIII. LUKE 2—25.

“Waiting for the consolation of Israel.”

THERE are in this chapter four things concerning Christ. His nativity, v. 1 to 21. Circumcision, v. 21. Presentation in the temple, v. 22 to 41. The proof of his prophetic office, v. 41. to the end. The third part contains many things. 1. The time of it, v. 22. which was the

fortieth day after his nativity. 2. The efficient cause of it, his parents, *Joseph and Mary*. 3. Its final cause, v. 23, 24. 4. The adjuncts; these are First, the prophecy of *Simeon*, v. 25 to 36. Secondly, the prophecy of *Anna*, v. 36 to 39. In this prophecy of *Simeon* we have 1. A description of some things concerning his person, v. 25, 26. 2. A declaration of his prophecy, v. 27, &c. His person is described, 1. By his piety, v. 25. init. 2. By his gift of prophecy, this is expressed generally by the efficient cause of it, v. 25. *The Holy Ghost was upon him*, and particularly by the revelation which he received, v. 26. His piety is set down by three graces. His justice, *He was just*. His devotion, he was a *devout man*. His faith and hope in God's promise, concerning Christ, see text, *He waited for the consolation of Israel*. Here are I. A description of what Christ is to his people. II. A declaration of what *Simeon* did in reference to Christ; *He waited for him*. God had revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, that Christ should come in the flesh, before his soul went out of the flesh. The holy man believed this, and earnestly waited for it. From these two particulars we have this double observation. 1. That Jesus Christ is the consolation of *Israel*. 2. That godly men do expect, and wait for the accomplishment of divine promises, even of such as are most unlikely to be fulfilled; I begin with the first, viz.

Doct. I. *That Christ is the consolation of the Israel of God*. *Simeon's* expectation was, Christ's coming in the flesh, as is clear from v. 25. he that is there called the Lords is here called *the consolation of Israel*. Christ is the only true consolation of all God's *Israel*. *Noah* was herein a type of Christ, Gen. v. 29. and the Prophets prophesied of him as a comforter, Isa. ix. 3, 6. Isa. lx. 1. Isa. li. 3. Isa. li. 9, 10. also see it in the Angels that proclaimed his birth, Luk. ii. 10, 11. In opening this doctrine I shall note three particulars.

I. *Who are meant by Israel*.

II. *In what respects Christ is the consolation of Israel*.

III. *That he is the consolation of Israel only*.

I. By *Israel* we are to understand true believers, Gal. vi. 16 they are called *Israel*, or *the Israel of God*. First, in reference to the people of *Israel*, believers are like them in three respects. 1. *In their inward cir-*

circumcision. It was the badge of an *Israelite*, and distinguished him from all other Nations, that he was circumcised. Other Nations are called *uncircumcision*, the Israelites *the circumcision*. Now believers only are spiritually circumcised; the foreskin of their flesh is mortified and cut off, they are circumcised with the *circumcision not made with hands*, Col. ii. 11. The body of sin is truly mortified in them. Phil. iii. 3. *We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit.* 2. *In the law written in their hearts.* It was the great privilege of Israel, that they had the law of God amongst them, Rom. ii. 2. and Psl. cxlvii. 19. Believers have this privilege above all people under heaven, that the law of God is with them, yea, is in them; not the law of nature, but of grace, Heb. viii. 10. 3. *In their nearness to God.* It was the great dignity of Israel, that they were of all people nearest to God, Deut. iv. 7. they were God's heritage, his peculiar people separated from all people under heaven. It is the great privilege of believers, that they are nearer to God than all other people; near in affection, and in relation, see Eph. ii. 13. thus they are called *the Israel of God*. Secondly, in reference to the person of *Israel*. *Israel* is *Jacob*, he had that name given him of God, Gen. xxxii. 28. Now every true believer very much resembles *Jacob*. 1. *In godly simplicity.* *Jacob* was a plain man, Gen. xxv. 27. It relates not so much to his outward condition, as to the inward frame of his heart. Believers are a single hearted generation, what Christ saith of *Nathaniel*, is true of them, at least in desire and affection; they are not only *without gall*, but *without guile*, Joh. i. 47. they study plainness, rather than greatness, they put away deceit far from their tabernacles. 2. *In holy zeal.* *Jacob* was a man full of the fire of heavenly zeal; how earnest was he in reforming his family, Gen. xxxv. 2. 3. Here is true zeal, it begins with reformation at home: all true believers have sparks of this celestial fire in their bosoms, Tit. ii. 14. they desire that they and theirs may be reformed, and resolve with *Joshua*, *I and my house will serve the Lord*, c. xxiv. 15. 3. *In wrestlings with God.* *Jacob* had the name of *Israel* given him, because of his violent wrestlings with God by prayer, Gen. xxxii. 28. see Hosea xii. 3, 4. his prayers and tears were the arms by which he wrestled with God. Every true believer is frequent in this exercise.

I give myself to prayer, saith *David*, Ps. cix. 4. He that hath true grace loves no exercise better than holy wrestling with God. *Epaphras* is described by his frequency in these exercises, both for himself and others, Col. iv. 12. In all holy virtues, true believers are like *Israel*, and therefore may well be called by his name.

II. For the second. Christ is the consolation of *Israel* By way of purchase, and of conveyance. First, *By way of purchase and merit*. Whatsoever is an ingredient or cause of true consolation, is by purchase of Christ. The Scripture makes mention of many grounds of spiritual consolation, 1. *Reconciliation with God*. There can be no true comfort till God and the sinner be made one; this is the first bottom of consolation, Rom. v. 2. The beginning of the Prodigal's joy, was reconciliation with his father, Luk. xv. latter end, Reconciliation is the purchase of Christ's blood; he is the only atonement of the soul, Col. xxi. 22. There had never been any pacification between Heaven and earth, if Christ had not interposed himself; he was contented that the father should make war with him, that his fury towards us might cease. He is our peace-offering, by whom we have peace with God and ourselves. 2. *The work of grace in the heart*. Sanctification is one ground of consolation. *The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xiv. 17. That comfort which is true, is built on righteousness. *The effect of righteousness, shall be peace, and the fruit of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever*, Isa. xxxii. 17. Now all our holiness and grace is the purchase of Christ; the shedding of his blood not only procures for us glory hereafter, but grace here; the conscience is purified by the streams of his blood, Heb. ix, 14. he is as properly our sanctification as our salvation. 3. *The pardon of sin*. Remission is an inlet of consolation, Isa. xl. 1, 2. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, tell them their iniquity is forgiven*. Sense of pardon is the true ground of spiritual joy. Christ's usual receipt for working of comfort is this, *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*, Mat. ix. 2. the heart may be light in heaviness when sin is once remitted. Now we know Christ's blood is the meritorious cause of the remission of sin; 'tis he that hath expiated our sins, Col. ii, 13, 14. He that will be forgiven any other way, shall never be forgiven; his blood is the

only bath for the washing away of sin, Eph. i. 7. 4. *Right to the promises.* The promises of the gospel, are the wells of true comfort, see Rom. xv. 4. If there be any *comfort in the Scriptures*, it is in the *promises*. Precepts are written for direction; threatnings for terror; promises chiefly for consolation, see Isa. lxvi. 11. The promises of the gospel are the *breasts of the church's consolation*; by sucking at these breasts, the heart is made glad. Now, who but Christ purchased the promises; all the promises of God are in Christ, 2 Cor. i. 20. in him as the procuring and meritorious cause of them all. The covenant of grace which is nothing else but a bundle of rich promises, is the purchase of Christ's blood. The world had never heard of a promise of any good, had it not been for Christ. 5. *Hope of salvation.* Hope is the door of consolation. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, Rom. v. 2. there's more cause of rejoicing in this, than in being able to cast out Devils, Luk. x. 20. We know that Christ only did, or could unlock the way to Heaven; he is the way to heaven, and the purchaser of heaven. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his son, 1 Joh. v. 11. he is called *the salvation of God* in this song, v. 30. There would have been no entrance for any of *Adam's* lost seed into glory, if Christ had not set the door open; it is he that opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. 5. *The gift of the spirit.* He is called the comforter, Joh. xiv. 26. his office is to work consolation in the hearts of Saints: spiritual comfort is therefore called joy in the holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. because he creates it in the soul, and his indwelling in us is the purchase of Christ, Joh. xv. 26. *When the comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father.* The third person had never been our comforter, if the second had not been our redeemer; there is no particular in our consolation but what is of Christ's procurement. Secondly, *By way of conveyance.* As all our grace is communicated and conveyed unto us from Christ, so is also our consolation. Christ by his spirit in the ordinances of grace, actually conveys comfort unto his people as he sees them need it, see 2 Cor. i. 5. All comfort is in Christ as a fountain; in him God hath put it for all his members, and from him it is communicated to them according to their necessity; as we receive out of his *fulness grace for grace*, so we receive consolation for consolation;

that is, one stream after another in sweet succession; he hath purchased our comfort, and doth seasonably administer it to us, according to our exigencies.

III. He is the consolation of *Israel* only. None but believers have a ground of actual comfort in Christ. 1. *The scripture makes consolation to be the privilege only of such, Isa. xl. 1. Comfort ye my people, saith their God.* The Ministers of Christ in the holding out of comfort, are confined and determined only to the people of God. The whole current of Scripture runs this way, Isa. lxxv. 13, 14. Consolation is proper only to them that are sanctified by grace. 2. *None but they have any actual interest either into Christ's merit or intercession, or any of his benefits.* Only the believer can say, Christ died for, and intercedes for me; both his satisfaction and intercession are confined to them, Joh. xvii. 9, 19. 'Tis true, the elect that are unconverted, have benefit in Christ's Mediatorship, by virtue of which, they shall in time be brought to God; but as to actual application, none but the true *Israelite* hath interest. 3. *Christ is terror to all unbelievers, not in himself, but because they reject him.* He that is the salvation of the believer, is accidentally the damnation of the unbeliever, Joh. iii. 18. It will be the greatest condemnation of the wicked another day, that there was a Christ whom they rejected; he is to such a *stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*, 1 Pet. ii. 8. they stumble upon him to their own ruin, v. 34. This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in *Israel*; he is set for the rising of the true *Israel* of God, and for the falling of the carnal *Israelites*; the condemnation of the unbeliever would have been more easy if Christ had never been.

I. For Information; it teacheth us a four-fold lesson. 1. *That the state of a believer is not a disconsolate estate.* It is the design of Satan and his instruments to cast what odium and infamy they can, upon the ways and children of God. Amongst many other unworthy reports, they say, that they are uncomfortable and sorrowful ways. The devil warns men, that if they once become holy, they must for ever lose all joy and pleasure, and by this means many are affrighted from the ways of God. How false and scandalous this is, the word of God, and the experiences of godly men abundantly shew; *Her ways, are ways of pleasantness,*

and all her paths are peace, Prov. iii. 17. and saith the text, Christ came for the consolation of Israel. Believers through their own carelessness, often droop and go heavily, but are never without a ground of true comfort; their's is a hidden consolation, which carnal men cannot see, and therefore think they are without it. God hath made as full and large provision for the believer's comfort, as for his duty, and let envious satan suggest what he will to the contrary, believers shall have their portion of comfort. Their present mourning and sorrow, doth but make way for the filling of their hearts with a greater measure of comfort, Mat. v. 4. Psl. xcvi. 11. 2. *That spiritual consolation is not to be tendered promiscuously unto all.* Precepts belong to all, but promises are appropriated only to godly men. Men are apt to quarrel with the Ministers of Christ, because they do not pour out the comforts of the gospel upon them; they think they have as great an interest in consolations, as the best of men; this text shews the contrary. God hath by his positive command, bound up his Ministers, and they cannot, without going beyond their commission, tender any gospel comforts to the unconverted, Isa. xl. 1. Christ came to be the consolation of none but believers. Penitential mourning must go before evangelical comfort. This order is observed by the father in Christ's commission, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. and in Christ's ministration, Mat. xi. 28. 'Tis as high a breach of duty in a Minister to tender consolation to an unbeliever, as to preach terror to a true believer. 3. *Why the believer is so overwhelmed with sorrow when Christ is withdrawn.* That Christ doth sometimes absent himself in his gracious presence from his people; few Saints but are able to say by their own experience, that upon such withdrawments the soul is exceedingly troubled. Scripture examples fully prove, Cant. v. 4. the troubling of her bowels, notes more than ordinary trouble; it was so great, that her soul failed and sunk within her, v. 6. she was without her soul, while without her Saviour, Psl. xxx. 7. The world wonders at such dejection, but Christ's absence is the absence of all comfort; he is the comfort of their souls, and of all other comforts which they enjoy: every thing looks black when Christ is removed. That which Judah said to Joseph concerning the affection of his father to Benjamin, Gen. xli. 33. is much more true of the believers affection to Christ, his life, and all his comforts, are bound up in the enjoy-

ment of Christ. Health is turned into sickness, riches into poverty, and comforts into discomfort; when Christ is withdrawn, no wonder if Saints look pale, and their countenance fall. The Disciples were much oppressed with sorrow, when Christ told them of the loss of his bodily presence, Joh. xvi 6. *Joseph and Mary* had the sorrow of a travailing woman upon them, when they had lost Christ but for a little time, Luk. ii. 48. How much more cause of sorrow is there, when Christ's spiritual presence is taken away! how did *Mary* weep when she missed the body of Christ in the sepulchre? Joh. xx. 13. it was a ground of comfort to her, and all believers, though she knew it not, that Christ was risen. Had not Christ been alive, our comfort had been for ever dead, see 1. am. i. 16. Jesus Christ is he that is the only reliever of the soul, and, therefore, if the believer's eyes run down with water, when he is withdrawn, there is no cause of wondering, unless at this; that every tear is not an ocean. 4. *That a Christian's consolation is a most rich and dear bought blessing.* What the Apostle saith of our redemption, applies to our consolation, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. You that are believers, are not comforted with corruptible things, but with Jesus Christ himself; not upon any outward thing, but upon Christ himself. Nay, consider that Christ became a man of sorrow, that he might be made to you a God of comfort, he drank up the cup of his father's wrath, that he might purchase for you a cup of consolation, he willingly poured out his own precious blood, that he might mingle a cup of strong consolation for the reviving of thy soul. The God of consolation hath gone the most costly way, infinite wisdom could devise, to provide comfort for his elect.

II, For Exhortation or Instruction. This commends many duties to the people of God. 1. *Take heed of building your consolation on any worldly thing.* It is not unlawful to take moderate contentment in outward comforts. God hath given us these things for delight as well as for necessity, and we are allowed to rejoice in them Eccl. v. 18, 19. But great care must be taken that we do not place our chief consolation in them. Most men build their comfort on riches, honour, pleasure, or some such thing. God's own children are too apt to offend in this kind. I might say many things to beat off the heart from seeking comfort in these things; as, *that they are fading.* The

best of earthly comforts is a dying one ; riches, honours, pleasures, friends, children, are short-lived comforts, the soul will live when these are dead. *They are insufficient.* They comfort but the lowest part of man. What joy can a spirit take in any sensual comfort? *They are common and ordinary.* The bad have as great, yea, many times a greater portion of all these things than the good. *They are distressing.* The bitterness in them is more than their sweet. *Job's* bed which he thought should have been a place of comfort, was a *place of terrifying*, c. vii, 13, 14. There is no comfort in this life, but it may and oft doth prove a discomfort. In short, God hath made none of these a Christians main consolation. (1.) *Its a disparagement to God's wisdom.* To build thy comfort on any worldly thing, 'tis as if thou shouldest say the infinitely wise God wanted judgment to chuse the fittest consolation. (2.) *It's undervaluing Christ himself.* As if he had not enough of all manner of consolations in himself. *Are the consolations of God small to thee?* Job xv. 11. To build the great comfort of thy heart on any worldly comfort, is to say, the consolation of Christ is small to thee. (3.) *It's the way to lose thy worldly comfort.* Christ cannot but in honour, either strip thee of such comfort, or else turn it into a cross. 2. *Let the Israel of God live comfortably.* It is often commanded in Scripture to the saints, to live as a comforted people, Psl. xxxiii. 1. Phil. iv. 4. The same God which bids you mourn for sin, bids you glory and rejoice in him. 1. *It is one end why the Scriptures were written.* Joh. xv. 11. As precepts were given for direction, so were promises for consolation. 2. *It tends greatly to the honour of religion.* A mournful life disparageth godliness as well as a profane life, it makes men think there is nothing but sourness in God's ways. 3. *To live dejectedly is a wrong to the spirit of God;* it denies one of his works: he is given for a comforter, as well as for a sanctifier, Joh. xv. 26. 4. *A disconsolate spirit doth much indispose the soul for the duties of Godliness.* An habitual heaviness of heart, makes duties tiresome and unpleasing. A melancholy heart is almost as unfit for the service of God as a frothy one. 5. *A melancholy heart creates many jealousies and sinful surmisings in the soul against God.* The soul that is so continually clouded with melancholy, cannot so heartily close with God, or commend his service to others as he might do. Much might be said to press this duty on believ-

ers, but I shall keep to the text, *Christ is the consolation of Israel*, and it is some kind of disparagement to him to walk uncheerfully; it makes men think there is not enough in Christ to cheer you. You are bound to honor Christ as well in this as in his other names. As you have in Christ many foundations of real comfort, so let it be your care to preserve and increase actual comfort. As it is a sin to look for comfort more than grace, so it is displeasing to Christ to be so covetous after grace, as to throw aside comfort. Your comfortable life honors Christ as well as your sanctified life. 3. *Take heed of slighting the consolations of the gospel.* We are very apt to look upon the duties of the gospel as very hard; and very prone to judge the comforts of the gospel very mean. It was this which *Eliphaz* charges *Job*, c. xiv. 11. it ariseth from the pride of our hearts; we think we deserve great things from God, hence we reckon our comforts and encouragements as low things. Now amongst many other considerations which exceedingly enlarge gospel comforts, this is one, that they are bottomed upon Christ himself. To slight the comforts of the gospel, is to slight Christ our consolation. Though others perhaps enjoy a greater portion of consolation than you, yet you enjoy more than you deserve; yea, the comforts which you account small, cost Christ as much sorrow as their's, who enjoy the greatest measure of comforts. Saith *Moses* to *Korah* and his associates, *Seemeth it a small thing that God hath separated you from the congregation, &c.* Numb. xvi. 9. 'Tis just God should remove all comforts from such as look upon any consolation received from Christ as a small thing. 4. *Acknowledge him the foundation of all your consolation.* When any beam of comfort falls upon the soul, how apt are we to neglect its true fountain; we look perhaps at our own graces and duties, as if our comfort sprung from thence; or at the ordinance through which it is conveyed: seldom are our eyes lifted up so high as Christ. Whatever conduit pipe be used, Christ is the fountain of every drop of comfort. Angels or all the Ministers on earth, cannot give the soul one drop; they can speak the words of comfort, but cannot cause the soul to receive it. God comforts by them, 2 Cor. vi. 6. Comforting is often called in scripture, the speaking to the heart, Hos. ii. 14. Who is able to speak to the heart, but the Lord and commander of it? God

hath put all the oil of spiritual joy into the hands of Christ, Isa. lxi. 3. and none but he can give it out. He that wants comfort, must go to him; he that hath received any true comfort, must ascribe it to Christ. *All my springs are in thee*, Psl. lxxxvii. 7. 5. *Let the Israel of God take heed of being a discomfort to Christ.* We cannot properly be either a comfort or discomfort to Christ by any thing we do; he properly receives no joy, nor is capable of feeling any sorrow from us, yet our sins are said in a figurative sense to be a grief and discomfort to him. If Christ were capable of sorrow, nothing would go nearer than his people's sins. If Christ be thy comfort, it's unfriendly and unworthy in thee to be his tormentor, it is but a disingenuous and unfriendly thing to be a grief to him that is a consolation to thee. *Paul* speaks of some who crucify afresh the Son of God, Heb. vi. 6. Every sin is crucifying Christ afresh; if we have the least gratitude let us loath the thought of vexing Christ. 6. *Maintain close communion with Christ.*

III. Consolation to the people of God; 'tis better in his hands than in ours; we are cruel and foolish to ourselves. 1. *In case of the want of outward comforts.* Saints are often short in outward things; God sees they are apt to surfeit on this sweet fruit, therefore he witholds it well, Christ is thy consolation. These things could not comfort thee without Christ, but he can comfort thee abundantly without these. 2. *In case of spiritual heaviness.* Remember Christ is the consolation of Israel. *He can comfort in all cases*, 2 Cor. i. 4. *He can comfort against all difficulties*, can bring comforts through hell, or an host of temptations to the soul, Hos. ii. 14. *He can give the soul ability to receive comforts*, Isa. lxvi. Wait on him and his ordinances, and you shall have sufficient comfort. He is full of comfort: He is willing to comfort; he hath undertaken to be thy consolation as well as salvation; he's anointed to comfort them that mourn, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. Say not, I have been so long without comfort. Jesus can give thy soul in one moment what shall make thee forget all thy sorrow; only wait patiently and believingly on him at the ordinances of comfort, and desire grace rather than comfort, and you shall find heart-revivings before you die. Them that are without Christ, labour to close with him, he is the consolation of Israel. What poor comforts

are those you now feed upon ; you feed on ashes, and eat husks ; you are jolly and brisk, and full of frantic joy, but if Christ be not yours, no comfort in scripture is yours. Come and taste of these comforts, they are pure satisfying and are eternal. All your comforts will be your torments, if Christ be not your comfort.

SERMON XXVI. LUKE 2.—25.

“ Waiting for the consolation of Israel.”

I PROCEED to the second doctrine, which is this, viz.

That true believers do wait for the accomplishment of divine promises, even those that are most unlikely to be fulfilled. No promise that God ever made to man had more improbabilities, and seeming impossibilities than the promise of Christ. He called a root out of a dry ground, Isa. 53, 2. Was to be born of a Virgin, Jer. 31. 22. and yet this good man had a revelation from God, that he should not die till his eyes had seen him waiting for the fulfilling of this promise. If any should wonder why *Simeon's* waiting for Christ should be noted as an act of such singular faith, when the generality of the Jews were big with the same expectation, *Chemnitius* gives two good reasons of it. 1. *The common bulk of the Jews did expect Christ only for external advantages*, as one that should restore their outward liberties now invaded and taken away, but *Simeon* waited for him as a spiritual redeemer, to save his soul from sin and hell. 2. *Simeon expected his early coming*, according to the predictions of the prophets, whereas the generality of the Jews had only a loose uncertain expectation of him ; therefore doth the Holy Ghost, take such strict notice of it. Other examples of it we have in scripture of the holy waitings of godly men for the fulfilling of divine promises. *Abraham* waited for the promise of a son, when his body was even dead, and his wife unlikely to conceive, according to the course of nature, Rom. iv. 18, &c. *David* waited for the promise which God made to him of succeeding *Saul* in the throne and though, when great difficulties arose he was sometimes put to a stand, yet he did expect the

accomplishment of the thing promised, Psl. lxii. 1, 2, 5. *Daniel* waited for the promise of restoring Israel from captivity, though there were many difficulties in the way, the Church being then as *dry bones*, Eze. xxxvii. 3, 4, 5, 6. yet he believed and waited for it, as appears by Dan. 9. *init.* He did count the number of years, and when they drew near a period, then he stirs up himself to pray with more than ordinary faith. The whole Church waited for the fulfilling of this promise, Mic. vii. 7, *I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me.* The people were in great distraction because of *Senacherib's Army*, and many waited on *Rezin.* and *Remeliah's son* yet did the true believers wait on God for salvation. This is the duty and hath been the practice of godly men in all ages. Here note.

I. What's meant by waiting for a promise.

II. Why the people of God do wait on God for the fulfilling of his promises.

1. Waiting on God for the fulfilling of his promises, comprehends three things. 1. *A firm believing that the thing shall come to pass.* Waiting is the acting of hope, and its foundation is faith; *Faith is the substance of things hoped for*, Heb. xi. 1. 'Tis impossible the soul to wait on God for what it doth not firmly believe shall be made good by God. *Abraham* would never have waited for a Son of promise, if he had not first believed the promise of a Son. *Simeon* could not have expected the consolation of *Israel*, if he had not first believed the promise of God for Christ. Take away the belief of the promise, and waiting for it ceaseth. 'Tis not an act either of grace or reason but of folly and madness to wait for that which is not first believed. 2. *A patient tarrying of the Lord's leisure.* Waiting is an act of patience as well as faith. *He that believeth makes not haste*, Isa. xxviii. 26. He that would have a promise fulfilled one day before God's time, is not a waiter but a commander. The holy Ghost describes waiting on God for a promise, by *tarrying till it be made good*, Hab. ii. 3. He was a wicked man who said, *Why should I wait on God any longer?* 2 Kings xxxiii. True waiting doth not limit the holy one of Israel, either for manner, or time. *Rest on the Lord, wait patiently*, Psl. xxxvii. 7. *Daniel* waited for the fulfilling of that promise of the church's

deliverance out of *Babylon* till the set came, Psl. cii. 13. Waiting on God, is called by *David* a being *silent to God*, Psl. lxii. 1. A quick eye and a silent tongue becomes him that waits on God; he may pray for the hastening of the promise, but the conclusion of all must be, not when I, but when God will, Acts i. 4. *Tarry at Jerusalem, and wait for the promise of the Father*. He that sets God a time to fulfil his promise, doth not wait for, but steals a promise; see Psl. cxxiii. 2. *Our eyes wait upon the Lord, until that he have mercy upon us*. 3. *An earnest desire to have the promise made good*. Patient waiting forbids murmuring, but not desire; waiting for a promise cannot be without hungering after it; the church in Psl. cxxiii. 2. was contented to stay God's time, yet in v. 3. she expresseth her desire, *Have mercy upon us O Lord, have mercy upon us*. *Peter* expounds waiting by a word signifying desire, 2 Eph. iii. 12. *Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God*. There is a two-fold hastening of a promised good; the one arising from impatience; the other from desire: now though waiters must not hasten any good impatiently, yet they may, and must hasten it with desire. To hasten any good which God hath promised, out of discontent, argues distrust of God; but not to hasten out of ardent desires, argues some slighting of the good promised. *I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord*, Psl. cxix. 174. Longing is the very height and extremity of desire. A waiter may not be a limiter of God, but he may be a petitioner for the fulfilling of his promise, Rom. viii. 19. *The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God*, *Apokaradokia*, the word signifies looking with a stretched-out neck, as a prisoner looks for an expected pardon, or a man for a friend, whom he hath long expected and would gladly see. This vehement desire is to be expressed, 1. *By frequent musings and meditations*. The soul must have its thoughts much upon the promise. What *David* saith of the precepts of God, that *they are always before him*, we must say and do with the promises of God, they must be ever before us, we must meditate on them all the day long. 2. *By fervent prayer*. Patience in waiting for a promise, and passionate earnestness in praying for its fulfilment, are not inconsistent. We must daily beg of God to give being to his promises; as Cant. viii. ult. *Come away my beloved, &c.* 3. *By a careful use of all lawful*

means to make good the condition of the promise. We must be as earnest to do what God hath commanded, as to enjoy what he hath promised.

II. Why godly men do wait for the good which God hath promised. 1. *They know themselves to be servants.* Servants must wait upon their masters for the good they expect, Psl. cxxiii. 2. Saints know they are but servants depending upon the free will of God for every thing; this makes them willing to wait on God; he that will not wait on God, denies God's mastery, Luk. xii. 35, 36. 2. *They know God hath given them both faith and hope, that they may wait on him.* Waiting is the acting of hope: a child of God would not have any grace lie idle in his soul, he knows God hath given every grace for exercise: not to employ grace received, is to abuse it. 3. *They know in some measure the greatness of the sin not to wait.* To refuse waiting, is to slight God, is to undervalue the promise as if not worth waiting for. A man cannot disparage either God or his promises more professedly, than by refusing to wait on him for his promises, and a Saint would not willingly cast any reproach either on God or his promises, from which he receives so much good. 4. *They are not unmindful how long and with how much patience God waited on them for their obedience.* They remember that God tarried Sermon after Sermon, year after year for their conversion, see 1 Pet. iii. 20. all saints are sensible of God's patient waiting on them when they had no mind to know him; slighting his grace and scorning his mercy: this makes them so ready to wait on God, Isa. xxx. 18. 5. *Their demerit of the good promised.* Believers know that all God's promises are free, they readily assent to, Gen. xxxii. 10. knowing how well they deserve the heaviest threatening, but how unworthy of the least mercy, therefore they unfeignedly say with *Dāvid*, 2 Sam. vii. 18. *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house that thou hast brought me hitherto?* A saint's motto is, *less than the least of all mercies of God.* 6. *They know the certainty of God's promises.* They have had experience how he hath made good the past promises, and they know he will shew the same unchangeableness in future ones; they know his name is *Jehovah*. God is self-existence, and that will give being to all his promises; this encourages them to wait, see 2 Cor. i. 10. It is ignorance of God that causes the heart to distrust, *They that know thy*

name will put their trust in thee, Psl. ix. 10. 7. The satisfaction they expect from the enjoyment of what is promised. They know every promise, when fulfilled, will bring full contentment of heart; they cannot now expect so much as they shall then find in the promises of God; they know they are, Exceeding great and precious promises, 2 Pet. i. 4. they know the harvest will make amends for all their expectation, therefore they wait for it.

The uses are for, Information, Reprehension, Exhortation.

I. For Information. This teacheth us, 1. *That godly men have a very good opinion of God*, they dare take his word, and are willing to wait the whole time of their life for the accomplishment of that he hath promised; as they dare follow God, when they know not whether he will carry them, Heb. xi. 8. so they dare wait on him when they see no reason for their waiting; did they not bear a singular affection to him, they could never with so much satisfaction wait upon him. 2. *The excellency of grace.* Grace is a choice thing in itself, and in its effects. This is one excellent effect of grace, that it enables the soul to wait on God for things that are most difficult to be brought to pass. Corruption teacheth the heart to wrangle with God, but grace, to wait on God. A gracious spirit is a choice spirit. 3. *That faith doth not only look to things present, but to future things.* Sense only minds things present, but faith, things distant, Heb. xi. 1. it is as willing to wait on God for a future good, as to receive a present good. Faith hath a lion's heart to bear present evils, and an eagle's eye to see future good. It's said of the patriarchs that *they saw the promises and embraced them afar off*, Heb. xi. 13. A believer is able to live upon good in reversion, as in fruition.

II. For Reprehension. To those that will not wait for the fulfilling of God's promises; these are. 1. Such as are over hasty, that would have the promise fulfilled before its time. 2. Such as never mind God's promises; look no more after them than if they had never been made. *Simeon's practice* blames both these. First, *For those that would anticipate God in his promises.* They are so eager for the fulfilling of the promises, that they would have them accomplished before their time; I would desire such men to consider 1. *This is a very sinful*

frame of heart. Whatever may be pretended as an excuse or extenuation, it cannot be denied, but the sin is great to be over-eager with God, to give being to his promise before the time. Consider, *'tis an implicit denial of God's right to appoint his own time.* The scripture puts times and seasons, as well as things and persons under the jurisdiction of God; it's his right to determine times, Acts xvii. 26. Christ said, Acts i. 7. *That times and seasons God hath put in his power.* Not to be willing to stay God's time, is to divest him as far as we are able, and to invest ourselves with this great piece of royalty; it is interpretatively to say that we will be the lords of time, and not God. *'Tis a limiting of God.* Moses reprov'd the Jews, that *they limited the holy one of Israel*, Psl. lxxvii. 41. Men that are free, will not be limited. To limit God, is to exalt ourselves above God, as if we were wiser than he. We are not wise enough to improve the times which God hath set, much less to set God a time. To endeavour to reduce or circumscribe God to our time, is to take away his liberty and freedom in working. *'Tis a questioning of God's faithfulness as if we were fearful he would not be as good as his word.* When we hurry men too hastily to fulfil their promise before the time, we give them cause to think we suspect their honesty, as if their words were but wind. To be over hasty with God, argues a secret suspicion in the heart, that God will let time slip; 'tis a sign that we do not esteem God's bond as good as ready payment. Abraham by wishing that Ishmael might live, Gen. xvii. 18. did argue some inward doubt whether he should have Isaac or no. Though he did recover himself, so as to believe without staggering, yet there was then some kind of vacillation in his heart. He that is over hasty with God, gives occasion to men to think that he doth not receive the promise without some distrust. To suspect God ever so little is a great sin. *It argues much impatience of heart.* He that would have a promise before God's time, doth bewray a secret discontent of heart, because the time was not set sooner. It implies dissatisfaction with what God hath done, as if it might have been done in a better time; he doth in effect say, God hath not chosen the best time. this is a great sin; it doth deny God to be God only wise. Thus you see the sin is great in being too hasty with God. *'Tis a denial of ourselves to be beggars.* We say beggars

must not be chusers. To be too hasty, is to say God's promises are not acts of grace, but debts. *'Tis a weak as well as sinful thing.* 'Tis christian wisdom to pray for the fulfilling of promises, but brutish folly to be impatiently eager for their accomplishment; the folly of it appears in that, 1. *We shall obtain it never the sooner for our impatience.* No man ever did, nor shall wrest a promise out of God's hands by impetuous violence. *I the Lord will hasten it in his time,* Isa. lx. 22. Our willingness to wait shall not keep us without it one hour longer, our impatience shall not produce it one moment sooner than the appointed time. Waiting patiently is the best way to ripen promises; impatient wrangling with God to set back the promises. God loves the force of faith, but he doth exceedingly loath the force of impatience. 2. *If we could through overmuch eagerness hasten a promise before its time, it would prove hurtful to us.* An unripe promise is like unripe fruit, nourishing only to diseases. *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time,* Eccl. iii. 11. 'Tis as true of promises, as of providences. Grace hath its maturity as well as nature. Promises grow to perfection by tract of time; when the set day is come, then, and not till then it hath full shape and proportion, see Mark iv. 28. *The earth bringeth forth fruit, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.* God in producing promises useth the same method, first the blade springs up, then the ear shoots out, after that, the full corn in the ear, and so on in process of time it's fully ripe. If a man should reap his field in the blade, or in the shooting, he would have straw, but no corn. Should God permit the impatient christian to reap the promises when but in the blade, or in the ear, he would lose all the benefit and virtue of them. It's a mercy to the believer that God gives him the promised good in the just season. We shall when we come to Heaven bless God as much for the timing, as for the making of his promises. A promise before its time, is like bread half baked, or meat half roasted; it doth neither feed nor nourish. *Impatient hastening of a promise deprives us of much of its comforts.* The promise of God lay a foundation of present comfort; the great comfort is in the fulfilling of it, but it yields some comfort as soon as ever it is made known to the soul. *Even to day do I declare, that I will render double unto thee,* Zech. ix. 12. it is a pro-

mise of return to the captivated Jews. Now as soon as the promise was made, they had a ground of comfort that God would put an end to their misery, and restore to them double what they had lost by their long bondage. As soon as ever God hath made a promise to a soul, that soul is sure. That God will never do it hurt. That God will in due time perform what he hath promised. The husbandman, though he do not reap presently upon the sowing of his seed, hath some ground of comfort as soon as the seed is sown, hoping that harvest will come, when he shall reap what he hath sown. Now a violent and impatient eagerness of spirit drinks up all the comfort which the soul might receive from the promise; the promise is almost to such a soul as if it had never been made; his weariness in tarrying breeds more torment, than the promise doth comfort to his soul. *It renders the heart less thankful to God for the making of the promise.* It is the duty of saints to be very thankful for every promise of God. That God that did not owe us any thing, should so strongly bind himself to by the cords of a promise, is worth your heartiest thankfulness. Grace and glory are both wrapt up in promises. He that is not thankful for a promise, deserves justly the edge of the threatening. Now the heart that is too hasty to have the promise fulfilled, will never be so thankful as is meet, that the promise was made; the anguish of his spirit in being delayed, will weaken, if not quite destroy the thankfulness of his spirit. A tumultuous wrangling Christian can never be a thankful one. Discontentment of heart in tarrying for a promise, will certainly hinder that thankfulness of heart which should be given to God for promise. *'Tis an indecent thing.* Very uncomely that God should be hurried by his creatures to make good his promises before his own time, because *God is our superior*, he is our King, our master, our father, and as far above the highest of us, as the creator is above the creature. 'Tis not good manners to be too hasty with a superior. *Woman what have I to do with thee, mine hour is not yet come,* Joh. ii. 3. It is unsuitable to the highness of the God of glory, to stoop so low as to observe the time of the best of creatures. Great men will not be hastened by their servants, it's incongruous that the great and mighty God should have his time appointed him, by the works of his own hands. The great God is willing to be petitioned by the meanest, but will not be determined by the greatest

of his creatures. *Luther* having been once too bold with God, about a business which he thought necessary, telling God it must be done, thought he heard this answer, *Martine admodum sapis, sed ego non sum Deus sequax*. It is not right for God to be counselled or hurried by his servants. *God is a free agent in whatever he doth or promises*. All his promises are gracious, they are called promises of grace, not only because they contain gracious things, but are the effects of free grace. When we impatiently put God on to fulfil what he hath promised, we forget that he doth all things according to the counsel of his own will, Eph. i. 11. it is not equal to determine him *God hath waited patiently, and still waits upon us*. Before our conversion he waited long, stretching out his hands with unwearied patience while we did oppose him. Since our conversion, he waits still, Cant. v. 2. Rev. iii. 20. he waits for our rising after falls, and for our obedience to duties commanded. 'Tis the most incongruous thing in the world, that a patient waiting God should be impatiently hastened.

II. *For those that never look after the promises of God*. Many men are so negligent and careless, that they never take any thought about the promises of God, they neither pray nor wait for them; if God would give them a being, they can be contented if not, they can bear it. I would have such christians consider four things. *This is a great slighting of the promises and of the good contained in them*, Rom. ii. 4. speaks of some who *despise the riches of God's goodness*. He that never looks after the promise, is guilty of this sin; he scorns the love of God the father, the maker of the promise; the blood of God the son, the purchaser of the promise, the grace of God the spirit the applyer of the promise. God complains of his people, that they *accounted the great things of his law are strange things*, Hos. viii. 12. He that never looks after the fulfilling of the promises of God, accounts them mean things. *It renders the promise less comfortable when it is fulfilled*. The soul's consolation in receiving the good of the promise, is according to its expectation in waiting for it, Isa. xxv. 9. He that exerciseth most faith and hope in waiting for a promise, shall find most joy in gathering it. We know how it befel that incredulous Lord, who would not believe the promise of plenty which God made by his Prophet, 2 Kings vii. 19. he saw it with his eyes, but did not eat of it. He that

minds not the good which God hath promised, robs his soul of half that joy which he might have from the promise. The promise will neither be so fat, nor so sweet as it would have been, if the heart had been more confident in expecting it. *This makes the promise wholly uncomfortable, till it's accomplished.* The very blossoms of God's promises yield some comfort to the soul; God hath revealed them, that the souls of his people might have some refreshment by them before they are brought forth. The thoughts that such a good shall certainly be ours, bear half as much comfort as if it were already ours. *We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God*, Rom. v. 2. The present hope of future glorification is not without some joy. The promise made to Christ, that *his body should not see corruption*, was a foundation of present comfort, Psl. xvi. 9, 10. The hope of the resurrection makes a saint die with comfort. All God's promises lay a foundation of present comfort; but he that never looks after the promise, what joy can he have from it? 'Tis the soul's believing and studying of the promise, that draws comfort from it. He that minds not what God hath promised, hath as little present joy from the promise, as it were not at all. *The neglecting of the promises is a real slighting of the precepts.* The same God which made the promise, commanded the soul to wait for it, and no man can disregard the promise, but he doth thereby make himself guilty of disobeying the precept.

III. For Exhortation. Let all them that profess themselves of *Simeon's* religion, wait as he did for the accomplishment of the promises of God. God made many promises of general concernment to the church of God; as the calling of the Jews, the ruin of Anti-Christ, and the establishing the mountain of the Lord's house upon the top of the mountains. God also made many promises of particularly good things to believers; the taking away the stony heart, the giving them victory over their spiritual enemies, &c. be intreated to expect the fulfilling of all these. I shall in this use, 1. Urge the duty by some motives. 2. Propound some rules to direct us in our waiting. 3. Answer some objections the soul makes against waiting.

1. For motives. Consider, 1. *That all the promises which God hath made, shall have their certain accomplishment in their time*, 2 Cor. i. 20. *All the promises of God in Christ*

Jesus are yea, and Amen. It is impossible that any promise of God should fall to the ground. See what comparisons God useth to declare the certainty of his promises, Isa. liv. 10. Mountains are the most fixed parts of the earth, yet the promises of God are surer than they, and Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21. the Lord compares his promises for their certainty, to the constant succession of the day and night. We have God's vow and oath superadded to his promise, to set out their certainty, Heb. vi. 17. The Lord hath annexed his broad seal of the sacraments to his covenant to shew the certainty of his promises, *His bow is set in the cloud*, Gen. ix. 13. Yea, consider that the scripture speaks of things promised, as if they were already accomplished, and all to shew the certainty of the promises, Isa. xlv. 22, 23. this deliverance was not to be accomplished till one hundred years after, yet because it was promised, God speaks of it as a thing done, Lam. iii. 58. *O Lord thou hast pleaded the reproach of my soul, &c.* The church was then in the very depth of affliction, yet she speaks of her deliverance as a thing past, *Thou hast redeemed my life.* Consider these things which discover the certainty of the promises of God. 1. *The fidelity of his nature*, God is the faithful God, *that cannot lie*, Tit. i. 2. *Men of low degree are vanity, men of high degree are a lie*, Psl. lxii. 9. God is a God of truth. The scripture builds the certainty of God's promises upon the fidelity of his nature, 1 Thes. v. 24, Psl. lxxxix. 33, 34. Sarah built her confidence on this foundation, in expecting that great promise, Heb. xi. 11. *She judged him faithful that had promised.* 2. *The immutability of his counsel.* God is unchangeable in himself, and his counsels, Jam. i. 17. there is nothing in God like change; men's promises fail, because their natures are changeable; they see some inconveniences in their determinations afterward, which they could not foresee, therefore they alter, but God foresees from eternity every difficulty that falls out in every age, therefore he changeth not. Men determine of things sometimes very rashly; second thoughts with them, are often better than the former; God resolves on nothing rashly, but with the deepest deliberation infinite wisdom can use, therefore he changes not, and because his decree is unchangeable, his promise is certain, Heb. vi. 17, and Rom. xi. 28, 29. God never alters his decrees, therefore he can never change his promises. 3. *The infiniteness of*

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his wisdom. God knows how to bring both ends of his promises together. Men break their promises often, because they want wisdom to make them good; but God is a God of knowledge, he knows how to give being to every word of his mouth; he knows how to deliver, 2 Pet. ii. 9. how to defend, how to supply: the fulfilling of his threatening word is built on his wisdom, Isa. xxxi. 2. he is as wise to fulfil his promises, as his threatening. 4. *His almighty power.* God hath strength to remove all and impediments that seem to thwart his promises. Rom. xi. 23. *They shall be grafted in, for God is able to graff them in again.* Upon this, *Abraham* strengthened his faith in the promise of God, Rom. iv. 19, &c. Men break their promises for want of power. The Apostles confess they were hindered, 1 Thes. ii. 18. *But who can hinder God,* Isa. xliii. 14. if mountains stand in his way, he can leap over them, Cant. viii. he can melt them, Isa. lxiv. 13. if sins oppose him he can scatter them, if devils stand in his way, he can rout them; nothing but his will can oppose his power, and he cannot will to break his word. 5. *The riches of his goodness and mercy.* The first rise of all divine promises is divine mercy, 2 Sam. vii. 18, 21. All the promises of God are nothing but a fabric of mercy, Psl. lxxxix. 1, 2. Now mercy and goodness which made the promise, will not fail to make it good. *David* built his faith on this, Psl. xxiii. ult. *Surely goodness shall follow me all the days of my life.* When mercy and goodness in God fail, then may promises wither. 6. *The exactness of his justice.* Not only grace, but justice leads for the fulfilling of the promises. *If we confess our sins he is just to forgive us,* 1 Joh. i. 9. God hath in Christ received a valuable consideration for all the good he hath promised, therefore it's but justice to make it good. Christ pleads with God in point of justice, Joh. xvii. 25. and the servants of God have expected the best of things on this account, 2 Tim. iv. 8. God gives Heaven to his elect as a merciful father, because 'tis undeserved; and as a just judge, because 'tis Christ's purchase. Promises are not only acts of grace, but bills of debt; God in justice will make them good. Promises are certain; upon this ground doth God require his people to wait, Hab. ii. 3. they may seem to languish, but they cannot die; the difficulty of the thing doth not in the least hinder the accomplishment of the promise. The things which are hard to us, are easy to God; that which

is very marvellous in the eyes of men, is not at eyes of God, Zech. viii. 6. *Consider the good of the promises*, they contain things that are very excellent, *great and precious promises*, 2 Pet. i. 4. The promises are like cabinets full of rich treasure. Promises of spiritual things are very excellent, and promises of outward things have much good wrapt up in them; one of the least good, yields more comfort than the enjoyment of greater good by common providence. Whatever a man enjoys in a promise, he hath God's love and blessing with it. A little coming from the heart of God, is better than a great deal from his hand only. Better to be an heir of one promise, than to possess the whole world by common providence. *Consider the excellency of a waiting frame of spirit*, it is a choice spirit. Waiting on God is one of the great duties, which he requires from his people. To wait on God continually, comprehends much of our duty to him, Hos. xii. 6. A waiting heart, honors God greatly, it hath as much benefit by good in reversion, as in possession, Heb. xi. 1. it can live comfortable under the crossiest providences; he that can wait on God for the good he hath promised, will not faint because of evil inflicted, Mic. vii. 7. he may conclude himself descended from the old Patriarchs, for *they saw the promises afar off, and embraced them*, Heb. xi. 13. A waiting christian hath a clear eye, and a long arm; he can see things at a great distance, and reach afar off; he is not much inferior to a comprehending christian. None but the saints in Heaven live so glorious a life, as the waiting saints on earth. The sight of faith is the next to the sight of vision.

II. For rules to direct the soul in waiting for promises. 1. *It is to be accompanied with obedience to precepts*. Many talk much of their expectation about divine promises, who make no conscience of obedience to divine precepts; such a waiting, is a groundless presumption. Precepts and promises must be eyed, both in their kind. *I have waited for thy salvation, and kept thy laws*, Psl. cxix. 174, 166. *I have hoped for thy salvation, and have done thy commandments*. It's a blessed conjunction when waiting on promises, and doing of commands go together. 2. *Waiting for promises must be united with prayer for their fulfilment*. He who is a true waiter, must be a daily petitioner; the church puts praying and expecting together, Psl. cxxiii. 2, 3. The freeness of promises

excludes the merit, but not the means of prayer. *I will be sought unto by the house of Israel to do these things for them, Eze. xxxvi. 37.* Prayer doth not purchase the promise, but helps both to sanctify and ripen it. He will best hold out waiting, that holds on praying. 3. *Waiting for the promise must be connected with joy in the promise.* A waiting heart must be accompanied with a thanksgiving one. *We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, Rom. v. 2.* While the soul waits for, it must rejoice in salvation. We must not wait with a sour face, nor a discontented heart, but with cheerfulness of spirit. To be admitted to wait, is a privilege, as well as to receive what we wait for.

III. For objections. Man's foolish heart is ready to pretend many vain excuses against this duty, as, 1. We have waited long, and yet God puts us off; the promise is as far off as ever it was in our thoughts. *The day of the promise draws nearer and nearer still; do not faint at last, Heb. x. 36, 37. The longer thou stayest the fuller will the crop be.* God's promises will bear their own charges. The longer the ship stays out, the richer will the adventure be. The promise will recompence thee fully for all thy stay. *The comfort of thy waiting is more than full wages for thy waiting.* God doth bestow some drops on the waiting soul, *he doth but stay to ripen the promise for thee, and thee for the promise.* It is not forgetfulness, but love, that makes him delay. 2. I see no likelihood of its fulfilling; no means appear. *He that made the promise can create means.* That which now seems to obstruct, may be the midwife of the promise. *Weak means will serve omnipotency to work by.* A broken plank is as good as a whole one, Acts xxvii. 44.

SERMON XXVII. ZECH 13.—1.

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened, &c.”

In the former chapter, the Lord promiseth repentance to the elect Jews, v. 10, 11. this promise was fulfilled partly upon the conversion of those mentioned, Acts ii. 37, 41. and Acts iv. 4. and it shall be fully accomplished, when the

body of the Jews shall be brought home to God, of which we read, Rom. xi. 25, &c. Note. *There are none so far off from God, but he is able to bring them nearer to himself by true conversion.* The Jews that lie rusting in their sin for many ages together, shall at last be brought to Christ. In this text we have a promise of pardoning and cleansing mercy to these penitent Jews, *In that day a fountain shall be opened for sin and uncleanness.* Here are, 1. A spiritual bath, *A fountain shall be set open.* 2. The persons for whom it is prepared, *The house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,* that is, for all true penitent believers, Isa. ii. 3. *Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* 3. The diseases for which this bath shall be effectual, *For sin and uncleanness,* or for separation from uncleanness; under these all spiritual distempers are comprehended; 'tis by way of allusion to the legal impurities. 4. The time for opening this fountain; in that day. It refers generally to the gospel times, particularly, and ultimately to the conversion of the Jews. I shall sum up all in this one general doctrine, viz.

Doct. *That Christ is a fountain, set open in the gospel to all true penitents for the purging away of sin and spiritual uncleanness.* Here I shall open four particulars.

1. That Christ is the only bath for the purging of spiritual uncleanness.

2. Why Christ is compared to a fountain.

3. How Christ purgeth away sin from the soul.

4. That only penitent sinners shall be purged.

5. How Christ is said to be a fountain opened.

1. That the purging away of spiritual uncleanness is the work of Christ; he can do it, and none else. This may be evinced, 1. *From express texts of scripture.* All purging work is attributed to Christ alone; his blood is the only scripture bath, see 1 Joh. i. 7. Rev. i. 5. Heb. i. 3. The Holy Ghost tells us, that Christ did by himself purge our sins; all the ingredients of this spiritual purgation came out of the heart of Christ alone; no creature contributed so much as one herb towards it. Prov. xvi. 16. *by mercy and truth is iniquity purged,* which is only to be understood as a qualification of the person purged, not of the meritorious cause of purging away sin, which the

scripture ascribes to the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, who is the only propitiation for sin, 1 Joh. ii. 2. 2. *From the legal purifications.* Many washings did God appoint in the law for their purifying, who were legally unclean. There were two great ways of ceremonial purification; the blood of the sacrifices offered to God, which was to be sprinkled by the Priests round about the altar, Lev. i. 5 11. and the water of separation, Numb. xix. init. Now, what was typified by both these, but this spiritual purgation of Christ's blood? Heb. 13. 14. The gospel mystery of all the Levitical washings amounted to this, that the blood of Christ meritoriously purged away sin. 3. *From the baptismal washing.* God hath appointed baptism, as the seal of the covenant under the gospel. Water is the outward element to be used in its administration; what does this mean, but the purgation of sin from the soul, by the application of Christ's blood? therefore is baptism called the *washing away of sin*, Acts xxii. 16. because by the outward washing of the body with water, is the inward washing of the soul from sin shadowed out.

II. Why his blood is compared to a fountain. 1. *To shew the fulness of his merit.* Fountains are full of water, there is an abundance, a redundancy of merit in Christ. The Prophet would distinguish the gospel washing from the legal. Those lavers were not fountains, but vessels, but Christ's blood the spiritual laver, is an abounding fountain; the spiritual washing is a rich and plentiful one, Joh. i. 14. and Rom. v. 17. The grace of Christ is every way proportionable to the necessity of the soul. 2. *To shew the lastingness of his grace.* Christ's blood endures so ever; streams dry up, vessels may be emptied, but fountains have a spring in themselves, and can never be emptied; this hath been running for many ages, and yet runs plentiful, as if just opened, it is an over-flowing fountain. 3. *To shew its purity.* Streams are sometimes muddy, but this is clear. There is not the least mixture of any defilement in the blood of Christ, it's compared to chrystal for its clearness, Rev. xxii. 1. The blood of Christ washes away defilement, but itself is not capable of contracting any. 4. *To shew its freshness and lively efficacy.* Streams may loose their virtue and efficacy; sometimes water that is sweet in the fountain, is bitter in the streams, especially if those streams be any great distance from the fountain; the nearer to the fountain, the more

virtue they possess, and the fountain itself hath the most virtue of all. Christ's blood is full of efficacy and spiritual vigor; it hath not lost, it cannot lose that liveliness and operativeness which it ever had. 5. *To shew its freeness.* Let me now shew how this excels all other fountains, 1. *This fountain does heal all manner of distempers.* Other fountains though of great use for some distempers, yet are not useful for all; yea, the best of them are destructive in some cases, but this fountain is as good for every spiritual disease as it is for any; it's set down indefinitely in the text, *for sin and for uncleanness*, that is for all sin, and for all uncleanness. The pool of *Bethesda*, Joh. v. 4. did shadow out this; that cured all diseases after the moving of it. Christ's blood is the true of *Bethesda*, which heals all sorts of spiritual diseases. 2. *One drop of this fountain is as efficacious as the whole.* In other fountains, though every drop be of the same nature, yet it is not of the same virtue; but here, every drop is of the same virtue with the whole. One drop of Christ's blood applied by faith, will purge away sin and uncleanness, as well as the whole fountain. 3. *This fountain purgeth the soul in a moment, of whatsoever filthiness is upon it.* Things that are very filthy, must remain long in other fountains, before they can be made clean; must be washed again and again before they be made white, but this fountain purgeth immediately; let a leper step into this, and he doth in one moment become a Nazarite as white as snow. *Naaman* must dip seven times in *Jordan*, or he could never be cured of his leprosy, 2 Kings v. 14. but if a soul dip but once in this fountain, he is presently cured. 4. *That soul who is once made clean in this fountain, is never filthy again.* Other fountains cannot give any such power to those who wash in them. Not as if a soul could never defile itself at all after its cleansing, for we gather new filth every day, and have need of new washings; but as to the principle cleansings, the soul is made clean for ever; it can never again return to that extremity of filthiness, under which it was: the old blackness of unregeneracy can never return. Every elect person is, or shall be once born again, but then he is regenerated for ever.

III. How Christ cleanseth away the uncleanness of the soul. 1. *His blood cleanseth the soul from the guilt of sin.* lays a person under guilt, Lev. v. 2. From this uncleanness

Christ's blood cleanseth, as it is our justification, for is the meritorious cause of our justification, Isa. liii. 4, 5. God doth for the obedience and sufferings of Christ acquit the soul from sin, and pronounceth it guiltless. Hence Christ is called *our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. see this fully, Rom. iii. 24, &c. 2. *His blood cleanseth from the filthiness of sin.* Sin is a filthy thing in itself, and brings filthiness upon the soul; this is removed by the sprinklings of Christ's blood in the work of sanctification, *he purges the conscience from all dead works, that it may serve the living God.* We are said to be *sanctified in Christ Jesus*, 1. Cor. 1, 2. He is as well the meritorious cause of our sanctification as of our justification. Every part of grace cost his heart-blood. Had not God poured forth upon us the blood of his son, our black and polluted souls had never been made white. We owe our holiness to Christ as well as our righteousness.

IV. That only penitent sinners are purged in this fountain, is clear by comparing this text with c. xii. 10. There the prophet describes the quality of the persons, they are such as *look on Christ whom they have pierced and mourn for him.* The fountain of Christ's blood is sealed to all impenitent sinners, but to them that mourn and are in bitterness for sin it's a fountain opened. Consider. 1. *Impenitent sinners will not prize it.* A man must both see and bewail his uncleanness, before he can value the healing fountain. Christ never comes with acception till the soul see it's need of him. When the Apostle saw that the Jews began to be in sadness then he shews them the fountain. Acts ii. 37, 38. An impenitent sinner will care no more for the grace of Christ in the gospel, than an innocent man for a pardon. When the scripture holds out Christ, it mentions something of this nature, Isai. lv. 1. and Matt. xi. 28. No man will greatly prize either ease or rest, but he that feels his load heavy. 2. *Impenitent sinners will slight and abuse it.* A hardened sinner despises Christ as much as a full stomach dainty meat.

V. Why Christ is called a fountain opened; he is called so in three respects. *To shew how willing he is, that sinners should make use of him.* He is not a *sealed fountain*, but a *fountain opened.* Jesus Christ is marvellously ready and desirous that polluted souls would make use of his blood. All the invitations he uses in the gospel, shew his readiness

Rev. xxii. 17. he hath for this purpose, appointed the gospel ministry, that solemn invitation might be made to defiled souls, to wash and be clean. All the complaints he makes of sinners backwardness in coming to him, are proofs of his readiness, Joh. v. 40. Luk. xiii. 24. With how much sadness of heart doth Jesus utter these words, *how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not.* He that commands his doors always to be kept open, declares his mind, that all who want succour should turn in for relief. 2. *To shew the clearness of the gospel revelation above the legal,* (saith Calvin) &c. I do not doubt, but by this word he notes the difference between the law and the gospel. Christ was a fountain for sin, under the law, but he was a sealed fountain, shadowed out by the blood of bulls and goats, and other legal purifications; but now he is a fountain fully revealed without shadows, or any such thing. 3. *To shew the readiness and easiness of access to Christ.* Paul, Rom. v. 2. makes mention of the access which the believer hath to the grace of Christ. Men pretend many difficulties; *There is a lion in the way, saith the sluggard, a lion in the streets,* Prov. xxvi. 13. *Who shall roll us away the stone?* say the women, Mar. xvi. 16. the same thoughts have men generally in their hearts concerning their coming to Christ; when they are invited to wash in this fountain, they presently reply, who shall unlock the fountain for us? this objection is fully answered, the fountain is unlocked already; when the soul is willing to come; all the hinderances are in your own hearts; do but conquer your own unwillingness, and the passage is easy, the fountain open.

Uses. I. For Information, this doctrine may teach us, 1. *To behold the heinous and abominable filthiness of sin.* It's compared to things of a polluting nature; to the scum of a boiling pot, Ezek. xxiv. 6. to mire and the vomit of a dog, 2 Pet. ii. 22. to the plague of pestilence, and of leprosy, 1 Kings viii. 38. Sin is a spot, Deut. xxxii. 5. a spot exceedingly black, broad and deep; many things shew its filthiness, the waters of the deluge in the old world; the flames of fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah; but above all, that it could not be washed away without the blood of Christ. That's a foul stain which cannot be taken away without the shedding of man's blood. The stain of covenant-breaking with the Gibeonites, was very heinous, it could not be done away

without the blood of all *Saul's* house, 2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2. 6. Sin is such a black spot, that it could never have been taken away without the blood of Christ. The son of God must open a fountain of blood in his own heart to expiate sin, *The blood of bulls and goats could not do it*, Heb. ix. 12. the garment was too foul to be cleansed by any such thing. Oh that sinners would lay this to heart! thy lying, thy bloody oaths which thou lookest upon as things so mean, thy defrauding, thy false dealing, thy covetousness; the guilt and filthiness of the least of thy sins could never have been taken away, if Christ had not opened the fountain of his blood as a laver for sin. When thy heart hath any good thoughts of sin, remember this way of expiation, and it will appear very heinous. 2. *Behold the dignity and merit of Christ's blood.* The scripture calls it 1 Pet. i. 19. *precious blood*, because of the dignity of his person, it is the blood of God himself, Acts xx. 28. and 'tis precious in its effects; by this God and man are reconciled; the church is redeemed and sin is expiated and perfectly removed. Consider, *the multitude of sinners that are cleansed by Christ*, all the elect of God in all ages. *The multitude of sins in every person*; every sinner is full of sores, not one free part, either of soul or body. *The perfection of the cure.* Every sinner is as perfectly healed, as if he had never been wounded. He cleanses *from all sin*, in 1 Joh. i. 7. *to take away the sins of the world for ever, to perfect them that are sanctified*, Heb. x. 14. All these shew the perfection of the sinners cleansing. Were not his blood of infinite value, it could never have wrought such an effect. The blood of all the men in the world could not expiate one sin, but the blood of Jesus cleanseth multitudes from millions of sin, and every one of them mortal. 3 *Behold the exceeding greatness of the love, both of the Father, and of Christ to mankind.* The evangelist admires it, Joh. iii. 16. it is admired by the Saints in Heaven, Rev. v. 9, 10. and it may well be admired by the Saints on earth. That God should shed the blood of his own son to make a spiritual fountain for us to wash in, argues not only exactness of justice, but abundance of love; it will appear love indeed, if we consider what Christ must endure before he could expiate sin; he must drink up the deep fountain of his father's wrath, *He shall drink of the brook in the way*, Psl. cx. 7. This brook is the wrath of God;

this did Christ not only sail over, but he drank it up. That God should cause his son, and that the son should be willing to drink up such a brook of wrath, that he might become a fountain to wash away our sin, argues love unspeakable, towards elect men. 4. *The church of God shall never want sufficient means for spiritual purification.* Here is a fountain opened, and being once opened, it shall never be shut again, its streams shall perpetually flow out in the gospel, while the church hath need of washing. Other fountains may fail through continuance of drought, but this can never fail. God promises to his church perpetual springs, Isa. li. 11. *Thou shalt be as a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.* This continuance is intimated in the circumstance of time mentioned in the text, *in that day*, (i. e.) the whole period of the church's continuance in time; the fountain stands open, and runs all the day long, in a full and plentiful stream. It is the Saints misery to contract continual defilement, but their mercy that this fountain ever runs. 5. *How inexcusable those are that die in their filthiness under the gospel,* because God made them at first clean, and they did wilfully defile themselves. Man's first falling into the mire of sin, was his own voluntary act, he can blame none but himself, therefore none of man's defiled posterity can be acquitted; but of all men, those that live under the gospel shall be most without excuse, for to them a fountain is set wide open, and they are daily invited to wash themselves therein, their sin is double; they do not only sin in polluting themselves, but in keeping the pollution upon them; they are filthy, not because they want water, the streams of Christ's blood runs by their doors, and, therefore, if their guilt abide, nothing can be pleaded by way of excuse; they were told of their filthiness, were invited to wash, and saw others by washing were cleansed, therefore their guilt remaineth. If *Naaman* after the prophet directed him to wash in *Jordan*, had returned without washing, who would have pitied him, if he had died a leper? Those that are brought to this spiritual *Jordan*, if they will not wash, shut that fountain against themselves, that God so graciously opened.

II. For Exhortation, it commends us, 1. *To take heed of despising this fountain,* see Isa. liii. 3. we have cause to join with him in the same complaint; the fountain of Christ's blood is exceedingly despised. *The Jews keep open*

the typical fountain. The Papists despise this fountain in making other expiatory fountains; instead of going to the fountain of Christ's blood, they go to mass, which they call a propitiatory sacrifice; and to the merit of their own works, thinking thereby to expiate sin, and purchase the favor of God. Christ may complain against the Papists, as God doth against his people of old, Jer. ii. 13. My people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. The scripture makes not good works, but Christ's blood our ransom, Tit. iii. 4, 5, 6. Our good works are so far from cleansing us from the guilt of sin, that they have need of cleansing. O Lord wash my tears, Isa. lxi. 6. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Thy repentance, prayers, and duties must be sprinkled with this fountain, else God will loath both thee and them. How unable is that to expiate sin, which itself stands in need of expiation. The popish purgatory is also a direct despising of this fountain, it reproaches Christ's purgatory, as if it were not sufficient, contrary to Heb. i. 3. The Socinians despise this fountain, in that they deny Christ to be a price for sin, they say Christ did not suffer in our stead, but only for our profit, to be as an example for us. We deny not, that Christ's sufferings is an example 1 Pet. ii. 21. but this was but an inferior end of his sufferings. We have benefit by Paul's death, and all Saints, but the principle end of Christ's death, was to be a propitiation for sin, therefore he is called a ransom, 1 Tim. ii. 6. A counterprize, because the end of his sufferings was to satisfy the justice of God for our sins. He himself bare our sins in his body on the cross, and by his stripes we are healed, 1 Pet. ii. 24. If Christ did not suffer in our stead as well as in our nature, we must suffer and satisfy for ourselves. God will have satisfaction, but the scripture saith, That he was wounded for our sins, he was bruised for our offences, the chastisement of our peace was on him, and that God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, Isa. liii. 5, 6. All unbelievers that make no use of this fountain, are guilty of despising it. Though men do not with the Jews, wash in the blood of bulls; or with Papists, make other expiatories, either of the mass or purgatory; nor with Socinians, deny the satisfaction of his blood; yet if we reject the tenders of grace in and through his blood made in the gospel, we despise it as

much as they. The prophet makes *not-believing in Christ*, and *despising of him* equivalent, Isa. liii. 1, 3. There is no medium between *not-believing* and *despising*. I have two things to say to all that despise this fountain. *It is a great sin.* 'Tis a despising of the richest love, the deepest wisdom, the most glorious grace that ever God did or could manifest to the sons of men; 'tis that which the Angels study for ever. *The danger is great.* He that despiseth Christ, despiseth cleaning. *All that hate me love death*, Prov. viii. 36. 'Tis a question disputed by divines, whether God could have forgiven sin without satisfaction. Most conclude, God by his absolute power might, but now he hath declared that he will not expiate sin any other way, than by Christ, Rom. iii. 25. therefore he that refuseth to wash in this fountain, must of necessity perish in his own filthiness. *Beh old ye despisers, and wonder and perish*, Acts xiii. 41.

2. *Let the opening of this fountain occasion the opening of fountains in all our hearts.* *Deep calleth unto deep*, Ps. xlii. 7. There are five fountains which the opening of this fountain should open in the heart of every believer.

1. *A fountain of love.* We should set this fountain wide open both to God and Christ, Rev. i. 7. and it should work love in us towards him again; we are commanded to love Christ, and threatened with a curse, if we love him not, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. If any thing can, the streams of this fountain, will cause the springs of love to overflow in our hearts.
2. *A fountain of thankfulness*, see Eph. i. 3. We are unworthy to wash in this fountain, if we do not daily render praises to God and Christ for it. Ordinary thankfulness will not serve for such an extraordinary fountain. We owe much thankfulness to God for the fountains of common water, but much more for this fountain of grace in the blood of Christ. Sing *David's* song of praise, Ps. ciii. init. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his name.* Our hearts if possible, should be as full of praises as this fountain is of grace.
3. *A fountain of sorrow.* This fountain shews our guilt. We should not have wanted it if we had not fallen into it, and we should never think of this fountain for sin, but should break forth into sorrow because of sin.
4. *A fountain of faith.* We can neither wash in, nor go to this fountain without faith. Christ will be to us still as *a fountain sealed*, if we do not believe in him. *In his name, through faith in his name, whosoever believeth in him shall*

have remission of sins, Acts x. 43. 5. A fountain of humility and self-denial. By nature we have proud thoughts of ourselves. All the good wrought in us we arrogate to ourselves: this should teach us to ascribe all our purification to Christ; 'tis this fountain that bath cleansed us, if we be cleansed, and it is opened to our hands. We could neither open, nor come to the fountain of ourselves, 3. *Make daily use of this fountain,* bathe yourselves in it continually. Though once washing be enough to purge away sin as to the main work, yet there will be need of daily purging. Though we need no new sacrifice for sin, yet we need daily applications of the merit of that one sacrifice upon every miscarriage. 4. *Whenever you see a fountain of water, think on Jesus* Had we spiritual hearts, we might think on him all the day long; few creatures but have some memorial of him; he bears the names of his people upon his breast; should not we bear him in our heart by holy meditations on him. The more we think on him, the more shall we love him, and the more will he communicate his love to us.

III. For Consolation. This doctrine is the foundation of all comfort to believers. 1. *Against the bitter fountain in our hearts.* We have a bloody fountain in our nature, which is always running. The droppings of this fountain defile us, and our services. Well, oppose this fountain to that fountain; that is more able to cleanse, than this to defile. Christ is a greater cleanser, than sin is a defiler, Mic. vii. 19: Though thy fountain defile thee daily, yet Christ's fountain can cleanse thee daily. 2. *Against their inability to make use of this fountain.* They are discouraged because of the obstructions which lie in their way. This text tells you, they are all done away; the fountain is not sealed, it stands wide open day and night.

SERMON XXVIII. JOHN. 1.—29.

“Behold the Lamb of God, &c.”

IN these words we have a solemn testimony given by *John Baptist* to Christ. The Jews hearing a report of *John's* preaching the baptism, send from *Jerusalem* divers Priests

and Levites to enquire who he was, v. 19. They were now in expectation of the coming of the Messias, and therefore send messengers to know whether *John* was not he. *John* doth humbly tell them, that he was not Christ, *but one sent by God*, as *Esaias* had foretold, to make way for him, v. 23, 24. When they questioned him about his baptism, he tells them that there was another baptist come into the world, whose minister he was, that did administer a far more glorious baptism than his, v. 26, 27. Having by this general description of Christ raised their expectation to look farther after him, he next day points him out in the sight of them all: *Behold the Lamb of God*, &c, the words are but short, yet they contain a full testimony of the priestly office of Christ. *Behold*, if ever speech was worthy of a word of attention, this is; he doth not use the adverb *Idou* which is ordinarily used, but the verb *Ide*, &c. which is used when matters of greatest concernment are spoken of. This *Ide o amnos* is as much as *outos estin o amnos*. 'Tis a punctual pointing out of the person of Christ. *The Lamb of God*. The Jews, though they acknowledged their sins, yet did not look to have them remitted by Christ's sacrifice, so much as by the legal ones. They looked more to the typical, than to the true lamb, therefore doth *John* call Christ, *the Lamb of God* to shew them that the guilt of sin was to be purged not by the levitical services, but by the sacrifice of Christ. The levitical lambs were lambs of God, but this is the substance of them all, therefore the article is prefixed *o amnos* that excellent lamb of which all others were but types. *Which taketh away*. The word signifies to lift up and carry away; to take away by taking on ones self. Christ takes away our sin by taking the guilt of it upon himself, the phrase signifies both the perfection and the facility of the work. *Chrysostom*, notes that the evangelist doth not speak in the future, or in the preterperfect, but in the present tense, to denote the continuation of the act. Christ is taking away the sin of his people so long as they are in this world. *The sin*. 'Tis in the singular number: Original sin, and all the sins which flow from that bitter fountain doth Christ take away, as if they were but one sin; it notes the perfection of the work. Christ takes all away so clearly that one hoof is not left behind. *Of the world*. Not as if every individual persons sins were taken away, Christ did

not sacrifice himself alike for all, Job. xvii. 9. 19. but he useth this word, *World* to shew that Christ's sacrifice is extended both to Gentiles and Jews. All that have been purged from their sin, have been purged by Christ; 1 Joh. ii. 2. that is, all nations and sorts of people in the world, that shall embrace the gospel. Here are two parts. A description of what Christ is, the lamb of God. A declaration of what Christ doth, he taketh, &c. From these two ariseth a two-fold doctrine, 1. That Christ is the lamb of God. 2. That this lamb of God is he that taketh away the sin of the world.

I. *That Christ is the Lamb of God.* This title is twice given him in this chapter, in the text and v. 36. Christ is a mystical lamb, see 1 Pet. 1. 19. *Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without spot and without blemish*, and Rev. v. 6, 8, 12, 13. yea, almost thirty times the name of the lamb is given to Christ in the Revelations. Let us consider three particulars.

I. Why Christ is called a *lamb*.

II. Why called *the lamb of God*.

III. How he excels *the typical lambs*.

1. Christ is compared to a lamb. 1. *In respect of his expiatory sacrifice.* He was the substance of all the lambs offered to God in the ceremonial law; we read in Numb. xxviii. of the lamb for daily sacrifice; for peace-offering; for the trespass-offering; for the free-will offering and for the new moons and first fruits, together, with the passover lamb, in Exod. xii. in all which Christ and his sacrifices was typified, and to answer which types, he is called a lamb, see 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. 2. *In the resemblance between Christ and a lamb.* A lamb is a patient and meek creature; he suffers himself not only to be shorn, but to be slain without noise; the meekness of the lamb is a proverb. Jesus was very meek, and a pattern of patience when on earth, Mat. xi. 29. he suffered revilings, buffetings, yea, even death itself, without noise, see 1 Pet. ii. 23. The prophet foretold his incomparable meekness, even in suffering death, Isa. liii. 7. this immaculate *lamb* not only lost his fleece, but his blood, without the least bleating of impatience. 2. *A lamb is a profitable creature*, it suffers wrong, but doth none. Innocent persons are called *sheep*, *These sheep what have done?* 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. Jesus is harmless and inno-

cent; he received much wrong while in the world, but never did any; many took offence at his words and actions unjustly, but no man ever received just cause of offence: he commands us to be harmless and blameless, Phil. ii. 15. and was a strict observer of his own rule. 3. *A Lamb is a profitable creature*, its flesh is good for food, and fleece for clothing: Christ is of infinite profit to the soul; his righteousness is profitable, thereby is the unrighteous soul made righteous; his blood, thereby is God's justice satisfied; all his prayers, tears, counsel, whatever he did or suffered, redounds to the benefit of the soul; his great design living and dying was, that he might everlastingly advantage his elect, he inconvenienced himself to benefit his church, for by his stripes we are healed.

II. Christ is called the *Lamb of God* 1. *Because he was ordained of God.* God from eternity appointed Christ to be that lamb, that should by the sacrificing of himself purge away sin, and procure our peace, see 1 Pet. i. 20. *Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world.* Saith Abraham, *God will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt-offering*, Gen. xxii. 7. Christ is a lamb of God's own providing; a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. xiii. 8. God elected, prepared, and actually called him to be the lamb sacrificed for sin. 2. *Because he is so acceptable to God*, being a lamb of God's own designation, his sacrifice must be very acceptable to God. Paul calls him *an offering and sacrifice well pleasing to God, even a sweet smelling savor*, Eph. v. 2. God is mightily pleased with Christ, and with his sacrifice for the elect. *Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life for the sheep*, Joh. x. 17.

III. Christ excels the typical lambs, because 1. *They were offered up frequently, the lambs of the daily sacrifice* were offered up continually morning and evening, Numb. xxviii. 3. but this lamb was offered up but once, Heb. x. 11, 12. his sacrifice is so perfect, that it needs no repeating, *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, v. 14. 2. *The typical lambs when offered up there was an end of them*, but this lamb quickened his dead body, *I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again*, Joh. x. 18. The bodies of the

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typical lambs saw corruption, but Christ's body saw none. *This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down on the right hand of God, Heb. x. 12.* 3. *The typical lambs were but mere creatures,* but this is more than the lamb of God, it is the lamb who is God himself. Though the God-head was not sacrificed, yet the person sacrificed was God. All the lambs offered in the law, were the creatures of this *lamb of God.* 4. *The typical lambs were offered up by others;* the priests were to offer them as sacrifices to God; but this *lamb* offered up himself, he was both altar, sacrifice and priest, he offered up himself without spot to God, Heb. ix. 14. had he not offered up himself, he could never have been offered. 5. *Typical lambs had no efficacy at all in themselves* All their virtue was in pointing out Christ, and being *shadows of good things to come,* Heb. x. 1. but the efficacy of *this lamb* and of his sacrifice, is in himself; his blood purgeth, and his death reconciles. These lambs did not take away our sin, but this lamb by the mere virtue of his own blood doth take away the sin of the world.

The uses. 1. *Behold the lamb of God.* We should often fix the eye of the mind on Jesus; let us behold him with an eye of affection. This lamb is the desire of all nations. Hag. ii. 7. he should be the desire of our souls; he is in the bosom of his father, let him be continually in our bosom; he is without spot and blemish, in whom all perfections meet, and we are unworthy to enjoy him if we do not love him. Behold him with an eye of faith. God is well pleased with him, and with those that by saving faith venture on him. All the legal sacrifices had their virtue from and accomplishment in him; the great command is, *that we should believe in the son of God,* Joh. vi. 29. He that will not believe has no benefit by him. 'Tis faith that makes over to us the virtue of the sacrifice he offered. 2. *Let us evince ourselves lambs of God, by being like this lamb of God.* We should imitate him in all imitable actions: not to offer up ourselves a sacrifice to God, this was proper only to this lamb; but to imitate him in his moral excellencies, *his meekness and patience,* Mat. xi. 29. and 1 Pet. ii. 19, &c. Christ had not one discontented look, he uttered not one passionate word; here is a royal pattern for us to imitate. He in his harmlessness, lived without offence, in a world full of

offences; let us learn to live as harmless, Phil. ii. 15. *To be without rebuke in a froward generation.* In his profitableness, *he went about doing good*; the more useful we are to others, the more like we are to Jesus. 3. *Give honor, glory, worship and obedience to this lamb,* The saints and Angels in Heaven *worship the lamb*, Rev. v. 8, 12, 13. If we worship him not, his wrath will break out upon us, Rev. vi. 16. He came first in a way of meekness, he will come again to them that provoke him, in a way of wrath. 4. *Follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth*, Rev. xiv. 4. Follow him universally, constantly, cheerfully, he will not mislead them who follow him; he that *follows the lamb* here, shall hereafter be led *unto living fountains of waters*, Rev. vii. 17. He is elsewhere called the *shepherd*; you cannot prove yourselves lambs, if you follow not this lamb; yea more, we can have no well-grounded hope to believe that we have an interest in his sacrifice, unless we endeavour to yield true obedience to him.

II. *That this is he that taketh away the sin of the world.* The scripture ascribes this great work of taking away sin only to Christ, Joh. iii. 5. he was manifested to take away our sins, and Isa. liii. 10. Mat. i. 21. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.* In handling this point, I shall open four particulars.

I. What is in sin which Christ takes away.

II. How Christ doth take it away.

III. Why Christ would take away sin.

IV. Whose sins are taken away by Christ.

I. What Christ takes away in sin. 1. *The guilt of sin.* Sin makes a person guilty in the sight of God, and exposes him to his just wrath; this is an inseparable consequent of sin. Whosoever commits sin, is liable to all the punishment which God hath denounced against it, see Rom. iii. 19. Now when *Paul* saith that Christ *takes away sin*, he means its guilt, that however a soul be in himself guilty, yet this guilt is not imputed to him, 2 Cor. v. 19. 2. *The filthiness of sin.* Every sin leaves defilement upon the soul, whereby it becomes unclean in the sight of God; Ezek. xxii. 4. *Thou art become guilty in blood that thou hast shed, and hast defiled thyself in thine Idols which thou hast made:* Filthiness is as essential to

sin, as heat is to fire. Now Christ *takes away sin*, means he frees a soul from its defilement, see Heb. ix. 14. Heb. x. 10. and 1 Pet. ii. 24. 3. *The punishment.* God hath threatened severe punishment against every sin, Rom. vi. ult. Gal. iii. 10. *Cursed is he that continueth not in all things written in the law of God to do them*; the text refers to this punishment, see also Gal. iii. 13. 4. *The dominion of sin.* Sin keeps the soul in bondage, but Christ takes away its lordship, see Rom. viii. 3.

II. How Christ *takes away sin*. 1. *By making satisfaction.* Christ by his death made satisfaction to divine justice for sin, and thereby took away both its sin and punishment: the whole wrath of God which sin did merit was laid upon his shoulders; hence the term *lamb of God* refers to his sacrifice, see Isa. liii. 5, 6. 2 Cor. v. 21. and Gal. iii. 13. Thus hath Christ taken away both the guilt and punishment of sin. 2. *By the communication of his grace.* Christ doth not only satisfy justice, by suffering what sin deserved, but communicates to the elect his righteousness, and by his spirit renews and sanctifies the heart with grace; by which he takes away the filthiness, and dominion of sin, see 1 Joh. i. 6. he puts his spirit into us, writes his law in our hearts, makes us partakers of his holiness, and so takes away the pollution of sin; we are as truly sanctified as we are justified by Christ. *Christ is made unto us of God sanctification*, as well as righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30. Eph. v. 25, 26. *He gave himself for us, that he might sanctify us, and cleanse us by the washing of water through the word.*

III. Why did Christ *take away sin*. 1. *The greatness of his love.* This was the principle cause on his part, Rev. i. 5. love brought him to the cross—carried him through the wine-press of the wrath of God; made him shed his blood, and pour out his soul unto death. Love put him upon the design, and carried him through it when he had undertaken it. 2. *To fulfil all the types which shadowed him out to this purpose.* All the sacrifices under the law, were shadows of Christ's sacrifice. The scape-goat carrying away the sins of the people, was a type of Christ's carrying away the sins of his people, Lev. xvi. 21, 22. Now Christ would not falsify these therefore he actually took away sin. 3. *The necessity of his people.* This was the

reason on man's part; there was no other means to take away either the guilt or punishment of sin. The people must die, or Christ take away their sin. see Heb. x. 4, to 9. There was no merit in man to deserve Christ, but there was inability in man, which was a motive for Christ to undertake the work, therefore he did undertake it for them.

IV. Whose sins are taken away by Christ? the sins of the elect only. Pelagians, and Arminians say, the sins of every person, but scripture appropriates this only to a certain number, see Isa. i. 21. *He shall save his people from their sin*, Joh. xvii. 19. *For their sakes I sanctify myself*, a peculiar number. And it cannot be said that Christ bare the sins of every man, for *Christ bare the sins of none but of such whom the Father hath given him*, Joh. xvii. 6, 19. Compared together. The father's gift, and Christ's death are limited by one another; those Christ died for, who were given him of the father, but all were not given him, see v. 6. *I have manifested thy name to them, whom thou hast given me out of the world*. If Christ equally intended to take away the sins of every man, then either every man's sin must be taken away, or else Christ would lose his intention; but the greatest part of men die under their sin, *Narrow is the way*, &c. Mat. vii. 1. and it's impossible that Christ should be deprived of his intention, Isa. xlv. 10. *Those that the Father hath given me shall come to me*, Joh. vi. 37. Christ's power is so strong, that his intention cannot be hindered. *Christ doth not pray for all, therefore he did not die for all*, Joh. xvii. 9. Christ's sacrifice is not larger than his intercession. If it be said Christ prayed for those whom he did not save, as Luk. xxiii. 34. the answer is plain, we must distinguish between the prayers of Christ as a private man, and those of mediator, Luk. xxiii. 34. is of a former kind. Christ as a man prays for his enemies, as Stephen did, Acts vii. Joh. xvii. was made by him as mediator, and therein he prays only for the elect. *Christ takes away the guilt and punishment of sin from them, from whom he takes away its pollution*, Heb. x. 10, 14. and Heb. ix. 14. But the pollution of sin is not taken away from all, therefore the guilt of sin is not taken from all. If it be said, that Christ tasted death for every man, Heb. ii. 9. I answer, every man is often put for many, 1 Cor. iv. 5. v. 10, 11. fully interprets who those all are; they are sons brought to glory, such as are sanctified,

such as Christ calls brethren : for every man of these, Christ did truly die, but these are a certain number only. If it be again said, 2 Cor. v. 14. proves that Christ died for all. I answer, v. 15. limit this *all*. They are such as live not to themselves, but to Christ, they are such, v. 17. as are new creatures ; for all these, we deny not that Christ died.

1. For Information. 1. *The mighty power of Christ*, Isa. ix. 6. None but a mighty God could have carried such a burden as the sin of the world. A world of men cannot stand under one sin, yet Christ carried a world of sins without sinking ; he could not have taken away sin, if he had not borne the whole weight of his father's wrath. If God imputed to a great company of Angels the guilt of one sin, they could not stand under it, yet Christ without sinking bore triumphantly all the weight which an infinite God could lay upon his shoulders ; as the word signifies, *surely he hath borne our griefs* ; his power appears not more visibly in the creation and sustentation of the world, than in taking away the guilt, punishment, filthiness and dominion of sin. 2. *The infinite merit of Christ's blood*, 1 Pet. i. 19. *precious blood*. 'Tis by its efficacy, that sin is taken away, see Heb. ix. 12, to 14. yea, there is such a redundancy of merit in this blood, that if there were many worlds of sinners, it has virtue enough to take the guilt of them all away. 3. *The tender love of Christ to the elect*. Many glasses are hung out in scripture to discover Christ's love to his elect. None shews it more clearly than Rev. i. 5. he might have taken away the world for sin, but he rather chose to take away sin from the world ; his love appears the more, that he took them away from us, by laying them upon himself ; *his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. To take away sin from us had been great love, though he had laid it on some other, but to put it upon his shoulder, is love past example ; especially considering what it must have cost him to bear the same. The text may well constrain us to say the love of Christ *passeth knowledge*, Eph. iii. 19. he would not have taken away the sins of his elect this way, if he had not dearly loved them. 4. *Why the Devil did so oppose Christ ?* As soon as he was born he stirs up *Herod*, Mat. ii. 7, 8. great *Herod* in *Herod* ; when he entered upon his ministry he assaults him, Mat. iv. init the reason is, Christ come to take away sin, therefore did Satan oppose

him. 5. *Who can deny that Christ suffered in the believers stead?* The Socinians grant that Christ suffered for our profit, but not that he suffered in our place; the scripture affirms it, 1 Tim. ii. 6. *He gave himself a ransom for sin*, a counterprice: a military word; when one man's life is ransomed by the life of another. Christ could not have taken away sin, if he had not suffered in our stead, as well as in our nature. 6. *Who can deny that Christ suffered the wrath of God?* Some think it not fit to assert this, or any torments in his soul at all, but read, *my soul is sorrowful even unto death*, Mat. xxvi. 38. *Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin*, Isa. liii. 10. He could not have taken away his people's sin, if he had not suffered what they should have suffered; truly, he suffered not eternally, for his merit made his short sufferings equal to the eternal pains of men.

II. For Exhortation. 1. *Take heed of thinking, to take away sin by any other means.* Papists will take away sin by their own works; filth cannot remove filth; Isa. lxiv. 6. they make the mass an expiatory sacrifice, and so nullify the sacrifice of Christ, who hath, Heb. x. 14. *by one offering for ever perfected them that are sanctified.* He that will have sin taken away by any other means, shall die in his sins Joh. viii. 24. 2. *Bless God for Christ.* Adore, admire this lamb of God; it will be the work of Heaven, let it be our work on earth. This one doctrine should set all our souls on fire with the praises of God and Christ. Sin would have taken away thy soul, if Christ had not taken away thy sin.

III. For Consolation. It's a ground of wonderful comfort to all believers. 1. *In case of contracting new guilt.* Every new sin brings new guilt, which shall never redound upon thy person, for Christ hath taken away all thy guilt. by fresh acts of faith lay all on him; he hath, he will satisfy, 2. *In case of the revivings of sin.* Christ hath taken away both the filthiness and dominion of sin; remember he hath begun the work, and still continues it, and will take away its very being in all God's children.

SERMON XXIX. CANT. 1.—29.

"A bundle of myrrh is my beloved unto me."

THIS chapter is a spiritual dialogue between Christ and his

church. Sometimes Christ commends the church, and sometimes the church Christ. In this text the church is the speaker. She here declares both what Christ is in himself, and what to her. My beloved is to me a bundle of myrrh, a cluster of camphire. 'Tis a proposition, in which we have. 1. The subject of the proposition; *my beloved*. 2. The predicate, he is *a bundle of myrrh, a cluster of camphire*. Before I come to these particulars, I shall from the whole lay down this general doctrine, viz. The soul espoused to Christ, hath a very great and high esteem of him. Let others judge of him as meanly as they please, yet these are my thoughts of him, he is *a bundle of myrrh, a cluster of camphire*, 1 Pet. ii, 7, makes it the character of a believer to have precious thoughts of Christ. He that is married to Christ, hath a mighty great opinion of him.

I: Their esteem appears, that 1. *They can rejoice in him in the want of all other things*, Heb. iii. 17, 18. Psl. lxxiii. 26. 2 Cor. ii. 14. A believer can glory in Christ, even to triumphing, when he is stript of all other things wherein he did glory. 2. *Nothing can satisfy them when they think of wanting Christ*, their joy is turned into sorrow if they conceive Christ is not theirs, see Gen. xv. 2. There was more in it, than the bare want of a child; Christ was promised to spring out of his loins, it was the child Jesus. 3. *They are willing to part with the best of worldly enjoyments for his sake*, Mar. x. 28. Jerome said, if my father that begat me were hanging about my neck, if my mother that bare me were lying at my feet, my wife and children weeping round about me to draw me from Christ, I would trample upon them all, &c. 4. *They take any pains to find him when he is withdrawn*. Wildernesses, deserts, seas, woods &c. are willingly travelled over, waded through, that Christ may be enjoyed. Cant. iii. 1, 2 Cant. v. 6, 7, Though they do sometimes, by reason of sloth, keep him out of possession, yet when they know what they have done, they would go even through hell to bring him back again. 5. *They do all they can to advance him amongst men*, Joh. iv. 29. this poor woman would gladly bring all Samaria to worship him. 6. *They commend him to their dearest friends as the greatest treasure in all the world*. They would rather see Christ formed in their children, than see them heirs of kingdoms. Gal. iv. 19. Prov. iv. 4 to 8. All these are arguments of esteem.

II. Why they esteem him so highly. 1. *The experience they have of his worth.* Every believer can say in some measure with *John* 1 Epis. i. 1. and *Pet.* ii. 3. Every Saint hath had a taste of Christ, they know and prize him. Ignorance of Christ is the cause of undervaluing him, *Isa.* liii. init. and *1 Cor.* ii. 7, 8. 2. *The sense of all he hath done for them;* he hath freed them from the curse, *Gal.* iii. 13. delivered them from eternal death, *1 Thes.* i. ult. washed away their sins in his blood, *Rev.* i. 5. made them sons of God, *Joh.* i. 12. and purchased Heaven for them, *Rom.* vi. ult. Innumerable are the benefits which Christ hath invested the believer in; this occasions a high opinion of him.

I. *Let it be for trial.* He that is espoused to Christ thinks highly of him, is it so with you? is he a bundle of myrrh to you or no? Every man thinks he doth prize Christ, but most deceive themselves; try, therefore, by these notes. 1. *Who reigns in your hearts?* Hath Christ, or hath sin, or the world, the throne? Lay that charge upon your souls which the church doth, *Psl.* xxiv. 7, 8. If Christ be not principal in your hearts, he is not esteemed. 2. *Who hath your thoughts?* Do you meditate upon, and study Christ, or the world? see *1 Cor.* ii. 2. there was nothing so much in his thoughts as Jesus. Desire of much communion is a true argument of esteem. Can you say as *v.* 7. set me where thou feedest? if so, then Christ is high in your hearts indeed. 3. *What opinion have you of his members?* are they precious in your eyes, because of their relation and similitude to Christ? *Joh.* v. 1. He that loves not Saints in their meanest dress, before sinners in their best robes, prizeth not Christ truly at all. 4. *What do ye do to bring others to Christ?* Do you woo souls to marry with Christ, and make it your work to cause others to be enamoured of him? then you may conclude you esteem him indeed; but if you be careless whether Christ be without disciples or not, he is not rightly prized of you. 5. *Do ye mourn for his dishonour?* *Psl.* lxix. 9. *The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.* Can you say so? you are haters of Christ, if you can hear or see him dishonoured, and not lay it to heart.

II. *Let it be for exhortation.* Get and keep high thoughts of Christ, he is a pearl of great price. Consider, 1. *It*

will be a means to facilitate your obedience. Who doth not find it a hard thing to obey? but the esteem of the person of Christ will make us willing fully to obey him. *Who is the Lord* (saith Pharaoh), *that I should obey his voice?* Exod. v. 2. had he esteemed his person, he would not have disputed his commands. 2. *You cannot value him at too high a rate.* The best thing on earth may be over-prized; Christ cannot, Cant. v. 16. Col. ii. 3. 3. *It will strengthen you against seducement.* Seducers are abroad, many are gone, this will keep us, Cant. i. 7. 4. *It will make sufferings easy.* I proceed now to the particulars, which are two: 1. The person, *my beloved*, and 2. the thing, in reference to this person; *he is a bundle of myrrh, a cluster of camphire*; the latter I shall wave, having handled it lately from another text; the former I note in this proposition. *That Christ is a bundle of spiritual myrrh.* The word here used for a *bundle*, signifies either a *bundle* or a *bag*. Some render it *a bag of myrrh is my beloved unto me.* Myrrh is a gum distilling from the myrrh-tree, which is gathered and preserved in bags; both the tree and the gum, are called by the same name. It was one of the ingredients in the holy anointing oil, Exod. xxx: 23, 24, 25. *Pliny* saith, there are two sorts of this gum, one distils of itself from the tree, which is the most precious; the other is extracted, which is of an inferior kind. To a bundle or bag of this precious gum, is Christ compared. The expression is taken from the practise of Virgins, who use to carry flowers in their bosoms. Christ is the church's promander, which she resolves to wear continually about her breasts. Note.

I. In what Christ is compared to myrrh.

II. Why to a bundle of myrrh.

III. How he excels all other myrrh.

I. Christ is compared to myrrh in five respects. 1. *Myrrh hath a perfuming quality*, it's of a fragrant nature, it's used to perfume garments and rooms. Psl. xlv. 9. *All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia.* Christ hath a perfuming virtue, see Cant. iii. 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?* His human nature is richly perfumed with the graces of the spirit, and he is able to perfume all places and persons where-ever he comes. The soul full of unsavory

odour, is by the communication of Christ's graces, made marvellously sweet. A sprig of this myrrh-tree, a grain of this precious gum in the soul, makes it like *the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed*. See Cant. iv. 11, 3, 14. How came all this sweetness, but from the communication of the graces of Christ to her soul? Natural man is a very filthy creature, Psal. xiv. 3. Every room of the soul is corrupted, and the only perfume which God hath appointed, is the graces of Christ; how sweet is that heart to God where this myrrh hath dropt. 2. *Myrrh is preserving*, it keeps things from corruption; it is used for the embalming of dead bodies; see Christ's body, Joh. xix. 39, 40. God would have Christ have an honourable burial, to testify the glory of his resurrection. Christ hath a preserving power, he keeps the soul from rotting: sin would shortly totally putrify the soul, did not Jesus dry up its corruption. Sin is called in Scripture *a leprosy, a fretting leprosy; a putrifying sore*, Isa. i. 6. Did not Jesus every day drop this spiritual myrrh upon the heart, it would be presently turned to rottenness, and every grace would moulder to nothing. 3. *Myrrh is beautifying*. The Virgins prepared for *Ahasuerus* amongst other purifying things made use of the oil of myrrh, Est. ii. 12. This oil hath an abstersive virtue, takes away wrinkles from the face, and makes the skin smooth and shining. Christ hath a beautifying virtue. Sin makes ill-favoured, but Christ by the myrrh of his saving graces, removes this uncomeliness, and puts a bright hue upon the soul. *Thou wast comely, through my comeliness which I put upon thee*, Ezek. xvi. 14. All the spiritual beauty of the soul is from Christ; he changes the black visage of the soul into a shining beauty, see Cant. iv. 1, &c. Christ from the mountains of myrrh drops beauty, and puts a fresh verdure upon the soul. 4. *Myrrh is healing*; Physicians use it to remove several distempers. *Pliny* saith, that is dries up rheums, clears the voice, helps the breath, and cures many diseases. Christ hath a medicinal virtue, he is both Physician and physic to the soul. *By his stripes are we healed*, Isa. liii. 5. he cures the guilt, filthiness, hardness, impenitence, deadness and unbelief of the soul. 5. *Christ is myrrh in regard of his passion*. Some refer this text principally to his sufferings. Myrrh hath bitterness in it. Christ underwent much bitterness, he suffered God's wrath and men's rage: he drank up a bitter

cup. The church here, (say some) meditates on this, and glories in it: and indeed, though Christ's sufferings were bitter to him, yet they were sweet to us; his death was our life, his sorrow our joy, his pain our ease. When Christ was suffering, the Jews gave him *Wine mingled with myrrh*, Mar. xv. 23. his cup of myrrh is turned into a cup of salvation to all believers.

II. He is called a *bundle of myrrh*. 1. *To denote the fulness of his perfections.* Christ hath not only a sprig or two but a great bundle of myrrh. All perfections are in him in an unmeasurable quantity; the best saints have but a few drops, but Christ hath an ocean of all graces: the spirit was not given him by measure, but *without measure*, Joh. iii. 34. he was c. i. 14. *full of grace and truth*; not only the fulness of the vessel, but of the fountain; not only of sufficiency, but of redundancy; he is to fill all his members, therefore *it became him to have all fulness*, Col. i. 19. 2. *To denote the perpetuity of all his perfections.* A bundle is to keep things safely. It is impossible that Christ should lose the least grain of any grace; the saints, though they can never lose all, yet they may lose some grace; but the graces and perfections of Christ are fixed for ever; *dwelling*, Col. ii. 9. It's always high-tide with him in all his perfections: as he cannot lose any of his elect, so it is impossible that he should lose any of his perfections. 3. *To teach us that none can have any of his perfections, but by his own voluntary communication.* The bundle is so fast tied up, that there is no obtaining of any thing but by his free consent. *All his saints receive from him*, Joh. i. 16. but all receive by way of free gift. *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God*, Joh. i. 12.

III. Christ excels all other myrrh in these respects. 1. *Other myrrh hath some dregs in it*, but in Christ there is nothing like dregs. There's no withered branch in this precious bundle, all is invaluablely precious. 2. *Other myrrh may lose its virtue* if it be kept over long, or carelessly; but Christ can never lose his virtue. These branches are as effectual as the first day they were bundled up. Neither time nor eternity will waste nor corrupt either the merit of Christ's blood, or the virtue and efficacy of his graces. 3. *Other myrrh is not gathered at all times*; *Pliny* says it dis-

tils but at certain seasons of the year; but this spiritual myrrh is continually dropping. Wheresoever, whensoever Christ is preached, some of this myrrh may be gathered; and 'tis always vintage and harvest time with him.

The uses; from the first particular, 1. *Take notice of the excellency of saving grace* 'Tis myrrh; this bundle of myrrh are those heavenly graces of the spirit, wherewith Christ was filled. His meekness, his patience, his faithfulness, his zeal, his humility, &c. Grace is a rare thing in itself, and in the account of holy men; 'tis set out by all the choice things which are known in nature; *precious stones* Cant. i. 10. *sweet spices*, Cant. iv. 13. *the richest metals*, Cant. i. 10, 11. One drop of grace, is worth an ocean of all other things. 2. *What eyes do they see with who despise Christ?* The greatest part of the christian world, look upon Christ but as a bundle of nettles: he is myrrh to the believer, but worm-wood to the unbeliever, he is a bundle of roses to the saints, but of thorns to the wicked. Christ is to most professors as he was of old to the Jews, *without form and comeliness*, Isa. liii. 2. Cant. i. v. 9. 3. *All you that love sweet perfumes, fall in love with Jesus.* That soul is unsavoury in which Christ is not. Many are much affected with sweet-smelling things, flowers, spices, powders; much vanity is shewed in these things: get this myrrh into your bosom, and you will be perfumed in the mind of God. Nothing in or from you will have a good savour with God, if this myrrh be not drop upon it. 4. *How precious is the meditation of Christ's passion to a believer!* Eph. v. 2. Rev. i. 5. hereby is justice satisfied, remission of sin purchased, reconciliation procured; this is a bundle of myrrh indeed. 'Tis our *Asylum* against temptations, and our City of refuge. 5. *Acknowledge from whence all beauty and sweetness comes.* 'Tis the anointing of this myrrh; this takes away all spots and wrinkles from the soul.

II. That Christ is a bundle. 1. *Here is comfort against our emptiness.* We are poor, defective wanting creatures; 'tis our pride if we see it not. When shall I have supply saith the soul? look to Christ, he is a bundle of myrrh, he hath enough for others and thee too. Thy emptiness cannot deject, so much as his fulness may relieve thee. 2. *Against thy losings of grace it may comfort thee.* Christ cannot, will not, lose any of his.

Are thy sins sealed in a bag, so are Christ's merits. 3. *That grace is not by our own merit or procuring.* What we have is by free gift.

III. *How Christ differs from other myrrh.* 1. Nothing can fully set out Christ; he is better than all comparisons. 2. Their folly that prefer material myrrh to Jesus.

SERMON XXX. JOH. 14.—6.

"I am the way, &c."

In the beginning of this chapter Christ prescribeth a precious cordial to his sorrowful disciples to strengthen their hearts against his approaching passion. He was more careful to remove their trouble, than to prevent his own. 'Tis usual for living friends to comfort the dying, but here the dying master is comforting his surviving servants. *Let not your heart be troubled ye believe in God believe also in me.* Though his humane nature should suffer, yet his divinity was to be depended on. Many ingredients is this comfort made of. 1. *His departure was to do them service.* v. ii. 2. *He will return to them again, to fetch them to himself,* v. iii. 3. *The place and state to which he was going were known to them* v. iv *He was going to his father, to a place of happiness; 'tis some satisfaction upon a friends departure to be sure that it is gainful to him to depart* 4. *His love to them should be as great after his departure as now.* Though he should be out of their sight, yet not out of their hearing. Their prayers should be welcome to him, though his body were at a distance, v. xiii, xiv: 5. *He would send his deputy, who should dwell with them when he was gone,* v. xvi, xvii, xxvi, xxvii. Though they should not have his corporal presence, yet his spiritual presence should be with them. 6. *They should have peace of conscience, which would be to them a continual feast to sweeten every bitter condition, which they feared, or should meet with in the world* v. xxvii. These are the rich cordials he gave for their support, The text relates to the third cordial, and as an answer to a question told

them that they knew the place, and the way to it. *Thomas starts a question about the thing ; we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way ? v. 5.* To this objection, our Saviour gives this positive answer, *I am the way*. Here is 1. The person, *Christ*. 2. The thing, *the way*. Whither this way leads, is to be gathered from what goes before ; *his Father's house, v. ii.* the place prepared for the elect, v. iii. the state of bliss, 'tis heaven itself. A way is properly a path leading from place to place. It hath many metaphorical acceptions in scripture. It's attributed to God's law, *Psl. cxix. 1.* To the doctrine of the gospel, *Acts, xviii. 26.* To the works of God. *Job xl. 19.* To the secret counsels of God. *Rom. xi. 33.* And to Christ himself as in the text. The doctrine is *that Christ is the only way to heaven* ; he is not only *a way* but *the way*, not only *the best way* but *the only safe way* to heaven. *I am the way, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* He is in the same sense called *the door*, *Joh. xix. 7.* All those texts which attribute salvation to Christ are proofs of this point. See *Acts iv. 12* *1 Joh. v. 11.* I shall shew.

I. In what respects Christ is called the way to heaven.

1. *By way of acquisition.* Heaven is the purchase of Jesus Man by his fall in *Adam* forfeited his right to happiness ; sin rendered him obnoxious to wrath. Christ by shedding his blood hath bought heaven, and so re-invested his elect in that interest to life eternal, which they had lost, see *Ileb. ii. 12.* and more fully, v. 15. It is by Christ's death, that the elect receive the title and promise of eternal life. As he, by his blood *purchased the elect to himself for a possession*, *Acts xx. 28.* so he purchased heaven as a possession for them.

1. *In regard of manifestation.* Christ hath shewed man the way to heaven, *he hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel*, *2 Tim. i. 10.* The gospel is called the gospel of salvation ; because it teaches how to obtain salvation ; this gospel is revealed by Christ, he preached it himself, and commissioned others to make it known to the world from generation to generation. Had Christ only purchased heaven, and not shewed us how to obtain it, we had been never the better for his purchase.

3. *In respect of preparation:* The fitness for heaven is as necessary as its purchase ; the purchase of Christ makes heaven sure to the elect, but something must be wrought in them to make them meet for it.

Nature must be changed, faith wrought, repentance practised, before heaven can be enjoyed, Col. i. 12, 13. The powers of darkness must be scattered, the habits of sanctification infused. *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, a man must be born again*, Joh. iii. 3. Now this is done by Christ, he communicates his own image by his spirit, to the soul, and so makes it capable of glory. Christ casts satan out of possession, makes the soul partaker of his divine nature, and so prepares it for heaven, Eph. ii. 10. *Created in Christ Jesus unto good works*. 5. *In regard of conduct*. Christ guides us to heaven, and is the *Captain of our salvation*, Heb. ii. 10. because he hath won heaven for us by conquering our internal and external enemies, and guides us to heaven. As the Captain marcheth before his soldiers, so Christ before his people. *The pillar of the cloud and fire* of old were types of Christ; those were appointed as guides to the children of Israel, till they came to Canaan, Exod. xiii. 21, 22. Christ is the spiritual *pillar of cloud and pillar of fire*, to lead his elect through the wilderness, to the celestial Canaan. He leads *by his example*; his own feet marked out every step of the way, that we, by walking in his steps may come to glory, Mat. xi. 29. The holy pattern of Christ's example in the gospel, shews us how to attain salvation. *By his word*. This is called the *way of life and peace*, Rom. iii. 17. Jer. xxi. 8. because it discovers how to obtain both life and peace; what to avoid, what to practise, that they may be saved. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths*, Ps. cxix. 105. *By his spirit*. This is the inward light, by which the soul is enabled to follow the example and word of Christ, *the voice behind us* which saith *this is the way walk in it*, Isa. xxx. 21. Christ by his spirit, lifts us up when we fall, and sets us right when we miscarry, keeps us in the way of peace, till he brings us to peace, Luk. i. 79, 6. *As he is the centre in whom all the lines of salvation meet*. Every cause of salvation hath its strength from Jesus. All the links meet in him, and depend on him. See *Election*. This is the first spring of salvation, and this hath it's fountain in Christ. Eph. i. 4: Christ the first elect, in whom and for whom, all others are elected. God elected Christ to be the head of the body. Our election is built on his election. *Vocation*. God hath intended savingly to call all those whom he hath

predestinated, Rom. viii. 30. Now effectual calling is build-
ed on Christ; we are *called by him*, 1 Pet. i. 10. By
our calling we are actually ingrafted into him,
that we may be made like him, and glorified with
him. *Justification.* *The unrighteous cannot inherit the*
kingdom of God, therefore must the elect be made righteous.
This is done in and through Christ; we are *justified in his*
name, 1 Cor. vi. 11, he is called, Jer. xxxiii. 16. *the Lord*
our righteousness. 'Tis through the imputation of his
righteousness, that we are made righteous. *Redemption.*
The elect as well as others are in a state of bondage, slaves
to Satan and sin; they must be ransomed out of the hands
of these tyrants; this is in and by Jesus, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
therefore he is called our redeemer, as well as our Saviour.
Sanctification. *Without holiness no man can see the Lord.*
An unsanctified heart is not only unworthy of, but unfit
for heaven. Now, we are *sanctified in Christ Jesus*, 1 Cor.
i. 2. this *in Christ* is the same, as *through him*; he is called
our sanctifier, as well as our justifier, Heb. ii. 11. Our
holiness is but a drop of that infinite holiness which is in
Christ. God hath filled him with an unmeasurable fulness,
to confer on us a proportion of every grace. *Perseverance.*
None shall be saved but such as continue unto the end; yet
perseverance is not the cause of salvation any more than
our grace; *we are saved by the grace of God.* Perseverance
is necessary unto salvation. Now as our grace is from Christ,
so is our perseverance in grace; 'tis by continual influences
from him, that grace (which is in its own nature perish-
ing) continues. Because our union with the vine
cannot be dissolved, therefore cannot grace totally perish.
Christ continually gives gracious influences by his spirit,
and, therefore, grace abides for ever, see Joh. iv. 14. 6.
As he blesses all the outward means of salvation. God hath
appointed many outward means, as helps to carry the elect
to heaven; these are the ordinances of grace, preaching,
prayer, sacraments; they are the means of begetting, and
increasing grace, and are so many *Jacob's ladders*, by which
the elect climb up to heaven. Christ is not only the author,
but the sanctifier of all these means; he gives virtue to the
word; efficacy to the sacraments, and power to prayer, to
make it able to help out the salvation of his people, he
gave the ministry to the church, to be a means of building
them up in grace, Eph. iv. 11, &c. and blesses and makes it

subservient to the great design for which it was appointed. *My beloved puts in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him*, Cant. v. 4. All the ordinances would be as weapons without an edge, if Christ did not bless them.

II. That there is no other way; take five particulars. 1. *The old patriarchs knew no other way. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the rest, knew no way to heaven but Jesus*, Joh. viii. 56. *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad*. The same applies to all the Patriarchs and Prophets. Much is imported in that phrase, *he was glad*; he did acquiesce in Christ, and so did the whole church at that time. 2. *The Prophets knew no other way*, Acts x. 43. 3. *The Apostles neither knew nor taught any other way. I desire to know nothing, but Jesus Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. also Acts iv. 12. *There is salvation in no other*. They call faith and holiness the way to salvation, but neither of these are contradistinct to Christ, they are not the meritorious cause of salvation. 4. *There's no need of any other*. Christ hath sufficient of every thing in him, necessary to obtain heaven. Christ is *all and in all*, Col. iii. 11. A fulness of grace and merit; enough for justification, and sanctification. One sun is sufficient for a whole world; one Christ for the church and all her wants. 5. *A curse is denounced against them, that look for any other way. Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins*, Joh. viii. 24. That man is in the high-way to destruction, who will not believe Christ the only way which God hath appointed to salvation.

III. The properties of this way. 1. *It is a certain way*. He that walks in other ways, will come to the end of his life, but not to his desired end; but he that enters into, and continues in this way; shall as certainly be saved, as if he were already so, 1 Pet. i. 8, 9. *he shall receive the end of his faith the salvation of his soul*. No man ever missed of heaven that kept this way to heaven. *Jacob's ladder*, which was a type of Christ, reached from earth to heaven. No man ever did, or ever shall see heaven, that seeks it not by Christ. 2. *It is a new way*, Heb. x. 20. not in regard of time, in that respect it is an old way, by which patriarchs, prophets, apostles went to heaven, Heb. xiii. 8. it is not new, as if it were newly found out; all new ways in this

sense are false: but it is a new way, as the covenant is called the new covenant. *Because of the clear and full manifestation of it under the gospel in comparison of former times.* The way was not then so fully known as now, it was covered under the levitical priesthood, with the shadows of many ceremonies and types, which are all now removed. *That while the first tabernacle was standing, the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest,* Heb. ix. 8. but now all these are removed, and the way is made perfectly known. *Because of its perpetuity.* There shall never be any more abolition nor alteration, either of the way, or of its revelation to men; it shall stand as now to the end of time, Heb. i. 2. Christ hath now made his last will and spoken his mind fully. 3. *It is a safe way.* Those in this way, have both direction and protection from God, which make a way safe. Men may be assaulted in this way; the devils will be tempting and labouring to thrust the people of God out of the way, but they shall not prevail; the devil may scare and fright, but he cannot plunder them, nor hinder their passage to heaven. *The angels of God ascend and descend upon the son of man,* Joh. i. ult. not only to attend on Christ, but as a guard to all that ascend to heaven by Christ. 4. *It is an easy way.* Mat. xi. ult. it is not without work and labour in it; not a way of idleness and sloth. Christian endeavour and diligence is necessary; *work out your salvation with fear and trembling,* Phil. ii. 12. He that thinks to be carried to heaven sleeping, shall be sure to miss it; but though it be not an idle way, yet it is easy, because *we have spiritual enablement from Christ, for whatever he commands. I can do all things through Christ, that strengtheneth me,* Phil. iv. 13. Christ doth not lay burthens on our back, and leave us to bear them by our own power, *he strengtheneth us with all might in the inner man;* Col. i. 11. *Wherein we come short, he satisfies for us,* he is content that all our defects and weaknesses, should be set on his score; he saith to his father of our spiritual arrears, as *Paul did to Philemon concerning Onesimus,* Phil. i. 8. *if they have wronged thee, or owe thee any thing, put that on mine account;* he is content that all our stumbling, back-slidings and deviations, should be imputed unto him. 5. *It is a comfortable way.* All things to make a way comfortable are to be found here: *here is good company.* None but Saints travel in this

way, 'tis the way of the righteous, and of them only ; here friends, brethren, men of the same heart as to essentials travel. *Here is excellent accommodation*; good provision and lodging, heavenly ordinances, to bait on at every stage ; Christ who is our way, is both our meat and our lodging, every saint hath him for his meat and drink, and lodgeth in his bosom till he come to his own mansion-house in heaven, which is both purchased and prepared for him. 6. *It is a plain way.* Jer. xviii. 15. *a way not cast up* ; all others are unbeaten ways, but this well trodden ; Prophets, Apostles, and Patriarchs have by their walking made this way smooth and even ; the weakest may without stumbling walk in this way. 7. *It's a holy way.* All other ways are unclean, but this is clean ; it's called a holy way, *because none but holy persons walk in it*, Isa. xxxv. 8, 9, 10. A person that is unclean in himself, as soon as ever he sets a foot in this way, is made holy ; it's a sanctifying way, *because holiness fits us for this way*. There's no coming where this way leads, without holiness ; Heb. xii. 14. *without holiness no man shall see the Lord* ; holiness is the way to heaven, Psl. xxxv. 8, 9, 10. because all whom Jesus brings to heaven, come a way of holiness ; holiness fits the eye of the soul, for the beholding of the beatifical vision, Mat. v. 8. An unrenewed soul is no more fit to see God, than a diseased eye to behold the sun. If it were possible that Christ should take an unsanctified person into heaven, it would be a dungeon, to such a man ; *there's no employment which he delights in* : singing Hallelujahs to God, contemplating and meditating on the excellencies of God, is the work of heaven, and this is wearisome to an unsanctified heart, which is tired out with one day of praises, Amos v. 8. *when will the Sabbath be gone ?* One hour's prayer is an hour too long for his devotion : what should such do in heaven, where this work lasts for ever without one moments interruption ? Heaven would be a hell to a wicked heart : *there's no company which he affects*. The company of heaven is God and Christ, saints and angels ; there's neither drunkard, swearer, nor covetous person in all that city ; all the inhabitants are saints in perfection. Wicked men hate the society of the godly here on earth, Prov. xxix. 27. what would they do in heaven where there is no other company ? The saints above would be weary of heaven, if they should see any wicked man there ; and the

wicked man if he were in heaven, would wish himself amongst the devils rather than be tied to eternity, to dwell in the midst of those whom his soul so much abhors. 8. *'Tis a very costly way.* Cheap to us but dear to Christ; he could not have been to us the way to heaven, if he had not suffered for us the torments of hell. *This way is through the blood of Christ, and through the veil of his flesh,* Heb. x. 19, 20. his blood was the red sea, through which we pass to Canaan; his crucified flesh the veil, through which we enter into the holiest of all. 9. *'Tis a way of God's own devising.* Man had wisdom enough to depart from the path of life, but none to find out this way; he had been for ever benighted in his own darkness, and wandered in his folly, till he had come to hell, if infinite wisdom had not found out this way. Heb. x. 19, 20. saith that *Christ hath consecrated it*; it is not of man's consecration, but Christ's. If all the angels of heaven had been summoned to consider of it, it would have come into the hearts of none of them; they have the grace to admire, but not wisdom to have found it out.

IV. How this way differs from all other ways. Here is a four-fold excellency. 1. *Christ is not only the way, but the end also.* Other ways lead to a place, but they are not the place itself; but Jesus is not only the way to heaven, but heaven itself. What is heaven but the full immediate uninterrupted enjoyment of Christ. Hence in the text he is *the life as well as the way*, not only the way to life, but life itself; not only the way to bliss, but bliss itself. The whole glory of heaven is described in seeing the face of Christ, Rev. xli. 4. 2. *Christ is not only the way to heaven but he that carries us to heaven.* Other ways do not carry the passenger to his journey's end. Christ carries all his people to heaven, Isa. xl. 11. *He gathers the lambs with his arm and carries them in his bosom*; he gives the spiritual traveller both eyes to see, and feet to walk, till he have brought him to his journey's end, Luk. xv. 2. *He lays the strayed sheep on his shoulder and carries it home*, else we should fall short of heaven. 3. *Christ is a way that is never unfit for the traveller.* Other ways too often need mending. The most even, in a few years, if much frequented, proves past travelling: but Christ needs no repairing. The saints have been travelling this way for above five thousand years. yet 'tis as good as at first. Some gives this as one reason why Christ

is called a new way, Heb. x. 20. He is every way as substantial as at the beginning. 4 *Christ is a living way*, Heb. x. 20. Other ways have no life in them, he is a speaking directing animating and quickning way. The spiritual traveller hath no life till he come into this way, and here he cannot die. We have known of many that have fallen dead in the high-way, but you never heard of any that died in this way. As there is no living out of this way so there is no fear of dying in it. *In him was life*, Joh. i. 4. Bring a dead soul into this way and he is presently enlivened.

1, For information. 1. *That the salvation of the elect is one and the same.* The apostle Jude, calls it v. 3. *common salvation*, because it's common to all the elect; it is full of common privileges, and there is but one way which leads to it. This way is Christ by which God brought the old saints to heaven, by which all the saints come to heaven. God never did, nor will ordain any other way to salvation. 2. *The impossibility of being saved without Christ.* *No man cometh unto the father but by me*, A man can never come to a city nor house, if he keep not the way that leads to it. No man can come to heaven, but by Christ. God was not prodigal of the blood of his son. Christ is, and ever was, the son of his father's peculiar love, if any other way could have carried the elect to heaven, the father would not have dealt so rigorously with Christ. It is a question whether God could have saved the elect without the suffering of Christ, most think he could not: all grant that this was the most glorious way, best for the manifestation of the justice of God, best for the evidence of his love, and best for the discovering of his hatred against sin, &c. Whatever God might, or could have done, now it is clear, he cannot save man any other way; he hath bound himself and cannot reverse it. Acts iv. 12. *There is salvation in no other. Eternal life in his son.* 1 Joh. v. 11. Those that know not Christ, cannot know the way to life. 3. *The necessity of saving faith for salvation.* (i. e.) *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he believeth not in the only begotten son of God.* Joh. iii. 18, The necessity of faith is not that it merits life but because it apprehends Christ as the way, and walks in this way. Christ is necessary as the meritorious cause, and faith as the instrumental

cause, whereby the soul closeth with Christ. 4. *The necessity of the gospel and it's preaching.* The gospel ministration is the way which God hath appointed discover Christ. Some there are, who would have the book of creation, without the preaching of the gospel, a sufficient way to discover Christ. But this is quite contrary to truth. For *the old Philosophers*, who were great and long students in this book, did not attain to the least measure of this knowledge; we find in their writings something of a deity, but nothing of a saviour. They that found out such great mysteries of nature, would have found something of this mystery, if those volumes could have represented any such thing. *The preaching of the gospel was instituted to supply that defect*, Rom. i. 16, 19, 20. especially 1 Cor. i. 21. apostles and evangelists had been superfluous, if the sun, moon, and stars, could have discovered Christ. *Christ sends men to scripture.* Joh. v. 39. Not search the book of creation, but search the scriptures. *Cornelius* is not commanded to look up to the sun, moon, and stars, but to *send men to Joppa, for Peter*, Acts x. 5, 6. He need not have been at so much trouble, if the book of creation could have discovered Christ to him. *The discovery of life and immortality, is attributed to the gospel.* 2 Tim i. 10, These were hid till the gospel was preached: by all which, it appears, that the gospel, and it's ministry are necessary to salvation, because by these, only is Christ discovered as the way to life, what secret ways of discovery God may use, where the gospel is not, we cannot tell, but sure we are, this is the common way of manifesting him to men; see *the miserable condition of those that reject Christ.* If ye ask who do reject him, I answer, all unbelievers, they that will not have him upon the terms of the Gospel, to be governed, sanctified, renewed by him &c. Their misery is great, because he is the way to salvation. God must make a new bible, must deny himself, change his counsels, yea be a liar, or else such men must be damned. *All they that hate me love death*, Prov. viii. 36.

II. For reprehension. *It blames those who make, or think to find other ways to heaven,* The vain heart of man is not contented to be ordered by God. In the state of innocency it was man's pride, that he would not be kept within God's bounds, Gen. 3. it is still man's folly and sin not to be ruled by his maker. 1. *The papists will make his own works the*

way to heaven. If the ladder of his own merit will not carry him, he will never go to heaven. It were well if men would seriously consider four things to conquer the fond conceit of the merit of works; we deny not the necessity of works, as evidences of grace and qualifications of salvation; God hath commanded them. But that they are either in whole or in part, meritorious causes of salvation, we deny, because *they are imperfect.* *What man is he that doth good and sins not?* Eccl. vii. 20. There are many black lines in the whitest web of our works; our gold hath much dross, Isa. lxiv. 6. We need nothing to condemn us but our own garments. The apostle would not that Christ should find him at the day of judgment in the most righteous work he ever did, Phil. iii. 9. The best of our works need God's pardoning grace, Neh. xiii. 22. *They are not our own.* Our evil works are our own, we breed, nurse and maintain them, but our good works are not ours, we neither beget nor produce them, they are wrought in us, and for us, but are not wrought by us, Eph. ii. 10. We are not the creators of good works, but *created unto good works*, Isa. xxvi. 12. our strength is too weak to make them; they are the fruits of the spirit, Gal. v. 22. We are not more able to sanctify, than to save ourselves. *They are God's due.* The best works we do are debts which God may require from us by right of creation, Luk. xvii. 8, 9, 10. He who does all he can, doth not do all he should, and if so, he hath done only what was commanded. The purchase of an old debt will not purchase the creditor's inheritance. *There is no proportion between man's work and life eternal.* What Paul saith of our suffering, may as truly be said of our doing. What proportion do our works bear to glory? All that we can do is not one hour's purchase. Heaven is given to none but workers, yet no man ever had it for his works.

2. *The Arminian will go to heaven by his own free-will.* Though he do not altogether reject Christ, yet he will go to Christ, and so to heaven by the power of nature; if he have not strength enough in his own legs, he is contented to fall short. Alas! what is nature, but a blind cripple? We cannot will the least good, but from the power of grace, Phil. ii. 13. The will of man is corrupted by nature, as the other faculties of the soul. God calls on men in Scripture to run, to work out their salvation; not because they have power, but to let them see what he may expect;

to let them know what they could have done once ; to shew them his willingness to help them ; to encourage them to do what they are able ; to drive them to him for strength: Christ indeed saith, *ye will not come to me*, Joh. v. 40. not because they have power to come if they will, but because they have no will to do what they can. Christ must renew the will before it be willing to be saved. The ladder of free-will is made of straw, and is too weak to carry us to God. 3. *The ignorant Protestant will go to heaven by his good meanings*: this is popery ; thy good meanings are the foolish thoughts of an ignorant heart. All other ways are not to, but from heaven. *Bernard* saith well, he will fall short of heaven which goes any other way.

III. For exhortation. *Let all those that are strangers to Christ labour to have an interest in him.* What is to be done that we may have an interest ? *Labour to see thy need of Christ* ; many die without him, because they are not persuaded of their need of him. Consider what thou art by nature ; all thy actual sins ; the exactness of the law ; the strictness of God's justice, he will have satisfaction : all or any of these considerations will convince thee of thy need of Christ. *Labour to be convinced of Christ's suitableness to thy soul*, see Rev. iii. 18. he can furnish thee with whatever thou wantest ; if poor, he hath gold to enrich thee ; if naked, he hath precious rayment to clothe thee ; if blind, he hath eyesalve to anoint thee. *Be convinced of Christ's willingness to bestow himself upon thee*, study Isa. lv. i. Mat. xi. 28. Prov. ix. init. Rev. xxii. 17. Christ doth not mock the soul in these offers. *Stand in the way where Christ comes.* The preaching of his word is his high-way, Luk. xix. 4. The sycamore tree, climb up thither, and Christ will sooner or latter give thee a call. Miss no opportunity in these meetings, and he will not pass by always. *Cry to him to take thee up.* The two blind men *lifted up their voice*, Mat. xx. 30. and Christ was intreated. *Get all that have an interest to join in crying with and for thee.* Christ will hear the prayers of his people for themselves and others. *Go to my servant Job, for him will I accept*, c. xlii. 9. *When Christ takes thee by the hand do not draw back* ; when in his ordinances he comes to thee, run to meet him. *Zaccheus came down quickly when Christ called*, Luk. xix. 5, 6. This is the best counsel I can give to those who are strangers to Christ. *You that are in Christ, continue in him.* Take

heed of apostatizing from Christ, seek no new ways; this is the old and good way. *Rejoice in him, he is a safe and pleasant way, Isa. xxxiv. 10. Look at Christ in all you do; he is the way, and your strength in this way; lean on him, Cant. viii. 5. Pray, hear, repent by his power; hold fast by the sides of the ladder, and you shall come to the end. Encourage others to come into this way. You cannot do Christ a greater kindness than to bring in others to make use of him: commend the way to them that know it not, that they may at last choose it.*

IV. For consolation; *it's comfort against thy own unworthiness.* Christ is the way, and he is worthy. *Against thy own stumbling.* Christ doth not only direct, but gives strength. *Against all the opposition of this way.* Christ will be thy convoy, as well as way; none this way, did ever yet miscarry, and thou shalt not be the first. Commit all thy cares to him; he that hath put thee into the way, will keep thee in it till thou come to thy journey's end.

SERMON XXXI JOH. 14.—6

“*Christ the truth.*”

CHRIST doth not only answer his people according to what they object, but to what he see them need; as he is pleased to give us more than our prayers, so he answers us beyond our scruples. *Thomas* did but inquire about the way, and Christ tells him that and something besides: *I am the truth and the life.* 'Tis good to be propounding questions to *Jesus*, he will answer us beyond our questions. This second branch of the answer affords this lesson. *That Christ is the truth,* As he is the way by which we begin, and the life in which we end; so he is the truth or the means by which we are helped on towards the end.

I. *What is meant by truth.*

II. *How Christ is the truth.*

I. *Truth* hath relation in this place to two things. 1: *To the doctrine of truth,* Gal. iii. 1. so it is taken, 2 Cor.

xiii. 8. Christ is, saith Leo, the way of holy conversation, the truth of heavenly doctrine, and the life of everlasting happiness. And *Bernard*; Christ is the way to heaven in his example; the truth in his promise, and the life in reward. And *Ferus*; Christ is the way that leads us, the life that feeds us, and the truth that enlightens us. Christ is, saith another, the way, as he is our pattern; the truth as he hath given us infallible rules for our faith and walking the life, as he gives us an assured hope that we shall reign with him. 2. *To the types of the law.* Truth is so used, as referring to Christ, Joh. i. 17. *Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* i. e. he is the substance of those shadows. Thus doth *Piscator* expound it, Christ is that true King and Priest perfigured by the Mosaical Priesthood; the true substance of all things perfigured by the types under the law.

I. *Christ is the truth of doctrine*, the heavenly truth of the scriptures. 1. *He is the author of all divine truth.* Scripture is called *the word of Christ*, Col. iii. 16. He that is the essential word, Rev. xix. 13. was the inspirer of the written word, and by his spirit dictated to the penmen of scriptures every sentence, word, syllable, yea, every letter which they set down; he was the great Angel who was with *Moses*, and the church in the wilderness. *Moses* received the lively oracles for the church, but Christ put them into his hands, Acts vii. 38. *Tertullian* upon the Trinity, disputes strongly against the Jews, and *Marcion*, that Christ was that Angel, who was seen of *Moses*: it was he also who directed the holy prophets in all their writings, who instructed the Jews in divine things, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. and who commanded and directed the apostles in writing the new Testament, Rev. i. 11. 2. *He is the publisher of divine truth; a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God*, Rom. xv. 8. He personally for three years and a half, as the prophet of the church, make known the truth of God to the world, Joh. i. 16. In his sermon on the mount, Mat. v. 6, 7. he preached the truths of the law, and vindicated them from the false glosses, which the ignorant Pharisees had put upon them; he also preached the covenant of grace, pressing upon men faith in himself, upon the pain of eternal damnation, Joh. v. 24. Joh. vii. 38. We read in the gospels many glorious sermons, which Christ himself preached; he

was a convincing powerful, diligent and constant preacher, *he taught daily in the temple*, Luk. xix. 47. 3. *He is the matter of all divine truth*, the chief sum of all the scriptures is *Jesus*; he is the golden centre where all divine truths meet, Eph. ii. 20. Each scriptural truth, as an object of faith, doth some way or other refer to Christ. The law was a *schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*, Gal. iii. 24. The prophets in all their writings and preachings respected Christ, Acts x. 43. he is the compendium of all the scriptures; look into what part of scripture you will, Christ is its chief scope. *Search the scriptures, they are they which testify of me*, Joh. v. 39. *In the volume of the book it is written of me*, Psl. xl. 7. Interpreters have descanted much what book is here intended; some would understand the beginning of Genesis, especially the third c. about the blessed seed; others about the beginning of *John's gospel*, which speaks of Christ: *In the beginning was the word*, &c. They hit the meaning best, who understand it of the whole scripture; 'tis not written in any one, but every place. The ceremonial law perfigured him, the prophets foretold him, *Moses* wrote of him, the gospel clearly points him out. *Hilary* saith, the scripture is nothing else but an epistle from the creator to the creature, and the inscription is nothing else but eternal health in and by Christ. Take what doctrine you will it refers to Christ; promises send us to him as their fulfiller and purchaser; precepts refer us to Christ, by whom we are enabled to perform them; threatnings send us to him, by whom we are to escape them. Christ and reconciliation by him, is the great subject which the scriptures treat on. 4. *He is the truth ministerially*. Ministers act by special commission from Christ. *As the Father hath sent me, so have I sent you*, Joh. xvii. 18. it is the voice of man, but the word of Christ; the ministry is ours, but the authority is Christ's, *he that sows the good seed is the son of man*, Mat. xiii. 37. he sows it as effectually by the hands of ministers, as if he sowed it immediately with his own hands; *he that heareth you heareth me*. 'Tis no better than spiritual stealth, to preach in Christ's name without a commission from him, Jer. xxiii. 30. The word of God is the word of Christ, because he inspired it, and the ministers of this word are his, because by him they are authorized for this work.

I. For information. 1. *The worth of divine truth.* There are many things which drove the worth of every part of divine truth; by this we know what to believe, and what to reject; what is sin, and what is duty; what ties us to God, and God to us. The least part of divine truth is better than the greatest portion of gold and silver; we are commanded to buy it at any rate, Prov. xxiii. 23. Amongst other arguments, this shews it to be a thing of very great worth; that it bears the name of Christ, and he bears its name. Christ loves truth so well, that he calls himself *the truth*; every word of truth is a ray of Christ, which teacheth us how to lay hold on Christ, who is the truth. Truth is our guide to lead, our girdle to strengthen, our meat to feed us. God would rather the whole world should perish, than suffer one divine truth to perish.

2. *What enemies are they to Christ, who would extirpate the truth?* In all ages the devil hath had his agents to dispute against the truth. In the beginning of the gospel, Arius opposed the great truth of the divinity of Christ. Marcion and the Manichees and others opposed the truth of his humanity. Nestorians, the personal union of the two natures in Christ; and still hath satan his instruments to corrupt some truth or other, who are not only enemies to the church, and to themselves, but great enemies to Christ; he that opposes the truth, directly fights against Christ; Christ is said to be opposed when his people are, Acts ix. 4: so he is in his truth, and opposers shall know another day if they do not cease opposing.

3. *That Christ will not be wanting to maintain divine truth;* he hath preserved truth to this day, notwithstanding all the attempts of the enemies, and he is able still to keep it alive. Neither is the love of Christ to the truth abated, nor, the relation of the truth to Christ cease; Christ is as near a kin to the truth as ever, and hath the same zeal and power as ever; he may suffer his truth to be wounded, but not destroyed; he will raise up men to defend it, and will rather than it should perish, stretch out his strong arm of power to uphold it.

II. For exhortation: 1. *This should beget strong affection in all our hearts to all divine truth,* Zech. viii. 19. 'Tis an amiable thing in itself, and a profitable thing to us; next to God, Christ, the spirit and saving grace, there is nothing so lovely as the truth. 2. *This should make us*

more studious to know all revealed truth. Search after this treasure, Prov. ii. 3, 4. In studying of truth, we study Christ; it comes from and leads to Christ, Eph. iv. 15. He that hath the greatest knowledge of, and the strongest affection to the truth, is like to have the nearest union with Jesus. 3: *This should work in all our hearts cheerful obedience to divine truth.* The truth deserves our obedience, because of its own worth; 'tis pure, holy, perfect and profitable; and because of its relation to Christ; in obeying it, we obey Christ, its knowledge is unprofitable without obedience: love to the truth is counterfeit, if not followed by obedience; all our privileges are for *obedience of the faith*, Rom. i. 5. 4. *This should teach us to hold fast all divine truth*, Thes. ii. 15. Heb. x. 23. and Jude iii. There is need to press this, because so many seducers are crept into the church, and many have left the truth; remember Christ is the *truth*, and as far as we apostatize from the truth, we apostatize from Christ. We must walk in the truth to the life; he that leaves a fundamental truth, will come short of life. Eight things will help us to be stedfast in the truth. *A clear distinct knowledge of the truth.* Want of knowledge is the downfall of many a soul. 2 Tim. iii. 7. A heart full of lust, and a head empty of knowledge, is the high-way to all error. *Get a strong love to divine truth*, Eph. iv. 14, 15. *Take heed of separating from Christ's church*, Heb. x. 23, &c. *Avoid known seducers*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. 2 Joh. ix. 10. *Take heed of small truths and small errors.* *Pray God to keep you stable*, Jude xx. *Consider the fearful wanderings of such as forsake the truth*; how far beyond their first intentions are many gone. *Be sure to practice what you know*, 1 Tim. i. 19. If the conscience be putrified, the head will soon be corrupt.

SERMON XXXI. JOH. 14.---6.

"Christ the truth."

I PROCEED to the second view of truth, as it is opposed to types and shadows. *That Christ is the truth and substance of all the shadows of the ceremonial law.* Before I open the point, note two things prefatory. 1. *God was pleased for a long time to dispense the covenant of his grace*

by many ceremonies, types and figures. The covenant of grace during the time of the law, was administred by a multitude of figures; the gospel then was wrapped up in sacrifices, ceremonies, and figures; because *this kind of teaching was the more fit for that infantine state of the church,* they were to be instructed by their eyes, as well as their ears. It hath been God's method to carry on his church gradually, from a lesser to a greater degree of light, Heb. i. 1. Children are taught first the letters, then to spell, and afterwards to read: God would have his church begin with the spelling book of types and ceremonies, and then to a higher form, and to a more spiritual way of teaching. When children are taught to go, they are first led, that so they may afterwards go of themselves. God was pleased to use this method to the Jews, see Gal. iv. 1, 2, 3. the church was not then come to its full age, and therefore it was kept in bondage under those worldly rudiments, as the young heir is under tutors and governors, until he come to a perfect man. *For the greater glory of Christ that was to come.* God to honor his son, was pleased to defer the most glorious and spiritual way till he came. It was fit that the greatest light should appear when the sun appeared. *Moses was a servant in Christ's house, Christ a son in his own house,* Heb. iii. 5, 6. It was fit that the greatest glory should be reserved till the master of the house came in person. 2, *That these ceremonies did figure out some things beyond themselves;* all were merely representatives. *Austin* calls them figurative observations. The divinity of that dispensation was merely typical; *they were shadows of future things,* Col. ii. 17. *Of good things to come,* Heb. x. 1. *Shadows of heavenly things,* Heb. viii. 5. *Patterns,* c. ix. 23. All these rites were to lead the saints, as visible guides, to higher things; and the more intelligent Jews did ever thus look upon them. I shall now shew, that *Christ is the truth:* this is plain,

1. *From express testimonies of scripture* Joh. i. 17. *The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* The administration of the gospel is called grace, not in opposition to the legal administration, but in comparison of the less and greater, for the same grace dispensed in the gospel, was to the patriarchs under the law, Heb. xiii. 8. There was then the same covenant and grace for substance, as are now.

Grace under the law was more hidden ; under the gospel it is more manifest ; grace was then communicated under figures, now it is communicated in its own native beauty, Col. ii. 16. 17.

II. *From the nature of the thing. Christ in the new Testament is called by the name of the types of the law. He is called* Heb. viii. 2. *The true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man ; to teach us that the levitical tabernacle, and all its service did typify him. The temple,* Job. ii. 19, 21. *because all the services of the temple did point him out to the church. The altar,* Heb. xiii. 10. *all our sacrifices and services have acceptance with God, because they are offered on this golden altar. Our sacrifice, our High Priest, and our passover,* 1 Cor. v. 7. *because the levitical priest-hood, and sacrifices, did perfigure him to the church. All the ceremonies and types of the law had their accomplishment in Christ. The whole shadowed out remission of sin, reconciliation with God, sanctification of heart, and eternal salvation. Remission of sin. All the sacrifices were offered that sin might be expiated ; now remission is only by Jesus ; God for his sake takes away the guilt and punishment of his peoples sins, and remembers them no more,* Heb. x. 1, to 5. *Eph. i. 7. had not he died, our guilt had not been remitted. Reconciliation with God. The sacrifices in the law were offered to make an atonement between an offended God, and offending sinners. Now Christ is he by whom alone we have atonement,* Rom. v. 11. *he is the only peace-maker between God and man,* Col. i. 20, 21. *The enmity had never been taken away, if Christ had not shed his blood. Sanctification of heart. The legal washing made those clean which were ceremonially polluted, see the water of separation,* Numb. xix. *This had its accomplishment in Christ ; his blood and grace is the only water of separation,* Heb. ix. 13. 14. *Eternal life. This was finally held out ; they expected not only pardon and reconciliation, but everlasting happiness. The holiest of all was a type of heaven. Now eternal life is only by Christ, he hath purchased it by his blood, and keeps it for the elect,* Heb. ix. 15. *If we should exactly go over all the rites of the law, we shall find, that in Christ they have the accomplishment. They were all of them abolished at the coming of Christ. When he was crucified, then the veil of the Temple rent*

in twain from the top to the bottom, Mat. xxvii. 51. to shew that his death was the fulfilling of all the levitical rites and ceremonies, Cant. ii. ult. The breaking of the day, notes the manifestation: then the church expected that all the shadows should fly away; these only were to be in use, till the time of reformation, Heb. ix. 10. and hence we find the apostles so earnest in preaching the observation of them down. Uses.—1. It shews the blindness of the Jews that did not see Jesus as Messiah Though he was so clearly prefigured by all the ceremonies and so frequently foretold by all the prophets, yet they did reject him. If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me, Joh. v. 46. see Deut. xviii. 15. and besides, all the ceremonial worship did exhibit Christ. All their sacrifices, sacraments, worship, manna, rock in the wilderness, the pillar of fire and of the cloud; their priests and Nazarites were all types of Christ, and yet when Christ their substance came, they rejected him, because their malice and God's judgment had blinded their eyes. 2. It shews their folly and vanity in keeping up the ceremonies now Christ is come. The Jews are so foolish to this day as to keep up their types; they reject the truth, and stick to the shadow, Col. ii. 16. 17. and Gal. iv. 9, to 17. Keeping up those abrogated ceremonies is dangerous; if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing, Gal. v. 2. and to revive them again, is to make Christ an impostor. 3. It shews that Jesus is the true Messiah. Abundance of undeniable arguments we have to confirm our faith in this fundamental truth; his genealogy, his birth, in its time, place, and manner, as it was foretold by the prophets; his death, resurrection, &c. Amongst many other arguments this is one, that Christ is the truth of all the types of the Messiah. Every thing in the old Testament typical of Christ, whether of a person or thing, is fully verified in Jesus; and types were nor shall ever be fulfilled in the person of any other. As face answers face, so doth Jesus answer all the types of the Messiah. 4. The identity of the salvation of the Saints of the old Testament and those of the New. The same held forth in the new Testament as the Saviour of the elect, is he who was shadowed out by the types and ceremonies of the old Testament; the same Jesus, and covenant, and way of salvation published in the gospel, was prefigured in the law. Heb. xiii. 8. Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he

saw it and was glad, Joh. viii. 56. and Heb. xi. 13. tells us, the *Patriarchs did by faith embrace the same promises as we do now*, and Heb. iv. 2. that *the gospel was preached to the Patriarchs*, as well as to us; only it was preached unto them in types and shadows, it is preached to us in clearness of demonstration. 5. *In what respect their ceremonial law is still useful to the church.* Not as a rule of worship, that were to deny Christ as come in the flesh, but it's still of great use to confirm our faith in Christ: we should thus use it, to see how all the types have their accomplishment in him, who was typified by them. See Heb. vii. viii. ix. and x. Chapters, which makes use of the levitical priesthood and its services, to shew that Christ's priest-hood was typified by that, and wherein he exceeded it: The ceremonial law will help us better to believe the gospel, and the gospel will help us better to understand all the types of the ceremonial law. 6. *What advantage believers have under the gospel above the Jews;* though under the same covenant with us, yet is our condition in many respects better than theirs, for we are freed from a multitude of chargeable ceremonies which burdened them; and have the way of salvation more plainly discovered than it was to them; they were taught by emblems, we by evidences: the abolition of the ceremonial law is one glorious part of christian freedom, see Col. ii. 14. Eph. ii. 14. and Heb. xi. 39, 40. Though they were our elder brethren, yet is our condition far better than theirs was. 7. *The love of Christ in fulfilling all the types of the law for us.* He is their truth, because he did in his own person fulfil them all for us; and the truth of all the sacrifices, as he offered up himself a sacrifice. 8. *That Christ will communicate to his elect all what the ceremonial types did prefigure;* he is the true tabernacle, the true scape-goat, the true blood-sprinkling. He that is the truth of all, will give us truly what the ceremonies typically shadowed out.

SERMON XXXII. LUK. 2.---32,

"The glory of thy people Israel."

THESE words are a part of *Simeon's* holy song, uttered at the presentation of Christ in the temple; it was revealed to

him by the Lord, *That he should not see death till he had seen the Lord's Christ.* Jesus being born and brought into the temple to be presented to the Lord, according to Numb. iii. 13. *Simeon* takes him up in his arms, and sings this song to the Lord, it begins v. 29. and ends with the text. The whole song is gratulatory; a song of praise to God for his great mercy, in giving Christ to the world; this mercy he celebrates. In respect of himself, v. 29, 30. he sues for his dissolution, v. 29. and assigns the reason of his suit, v. 30. God had made his promise good in preserving his life till Christ was born, this he acknowledgeth; is satisfied with living, and intreats a dismissal according to the word of the Lord. He celebrates this mercy in reference to others. 1. Generally, v. 31. 2. Particularly; he shews what Christ should be to the Gentiles, namely a light to give them light. What he should be to the Jews, *the glory of his people Israel*: in which are, Israel's relation to God; they are his people. Christ's description in reference to Israel; he is their glory. *Glory* is hereby a metonymy of the effect, put for the author of glory. *Israel* is taken two ways in scripture; for the natural Israel; the Jews were so called from *Jacob* their father, who had the name of Israel given him, Gen. xxxii. 27, 28. For the spiritual Israel; including all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. Gal. vi. 16. *As many as walk according to this rule, grace and mercy be on them, and on the Israel of God.* Now the text hath relation to both: Christ is the glory of the natural Israel, of whom he descended according to the flesh, and of the spiritual Israel, in whom he is conceived according to the promise. Here is a double lesson. 1. That it's a great honour to be the people of God. 2. Christ is the glory of all God's people. (1.) *That it's a great honour to be the people of God.* This was what advanced Israel above all the people of the earth, Psl. cxxxv. 4. *The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure. All other people were strangers, were as far off, Israel was a people near unto God,* and *Moses* mentions this with joy, Deut. xxxii. 9. *The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* It was the honour of the Levites above all the tribes, to be the Lord's peculiar portion, and it is the dignity of believers above all the world, to be the special lot of God. I shall shew

I. Why men may be said to be the people of God;

there are two ways whereby men are reputed God's people, generally and especially. 1. Generally men are God's people. *By creation* all whether good or bad are his people, thus God hath spoken them into being; yea in this respect not only men, but inanimate creatures are the Lords, Psl. lxxiv. 16. *The day is thine, and the night is thine*, and Psl. lxxxix. 11. *The heavens are thine, and the earth is thine*. In this sense the very devils are the Lords, he hath created them as well as the holy angels. *By outward profession*. In this sense all are the people of God, who perform external worship to him, though they be not inwardly holy; the carnal Israelites, as well as the spiritual seed; *Cain* as well as *Abel*, and *Esau* as well as *Jacob*. *By designation to public office*. Hence those deputed of God to any special office, as God's deputies, may be called the people of the Lord, whether they be good or bad; thus *Cyrus* though a heathen King, is called *God's shepherd*, Isa. xlvii. 1. he was as much the servant of the Lord in this sense, as *David*. 'Tis no very great honour to be God's people in this general way, because this is as peculiar to the worst as to the best. 2. *Especially*, the people of God are called his. *In special election*. They have been in his thoughts, lain in his bosom, wrapt up in his electing grace from eternity, written in that golden book of predestination from eternity, Joh. xvii. 6. They had the secret infallible mark of divine election upon them before the foundation of the world, 2 Thes. ii. 13. *In redemption*. He hath purchased them by the blood of his son. The elect as well as others had lost themselves in *Adam*, and could not be his, without redeeming grace. God by the death of Christ, ransomed them from the hands of the devil and sin, see Isa. xliii. 1. and 1 Pet. ii. 9. Had they not been a purchased as well as an elected people, they could never have been the Lords. *In covenant*. God hath in Christ stricken a covenant of life and peace with them, wherein he hath engaged himself to be theirs, Isa. lxiii. 7, 8. hence called v. 18. *The people of God's holiness*, because God hath by the stipulation of a holy covenant, made them his own, Hos. ii. 19, &c. *In dedication*. They have spontaneously surrendered themselves to be his for ever, Psl. cxvi. 16. *Behold Lord, I am thy servant*, which *Paul* calls yielding up ourselves to God; the covenant is mutual, when God chooseth the believer; the believer chooseth God, Hos. ii. 23. *And they shall*

say thou art my God. In possession. He hath by the spirit taken full possession of them; as they are united to him, so he is to them; as he is their dwelling place, so are they his mansion house. *An habitation of God through the spirit*, Eph. ii. 22. They are living temples in which he walks; spiritual houses in which he dwells; the terrestrial court, wherein the King of glory keeps his abode, till he remove them to abide with him in Heaven.

II. Wherein the honour of this condition consists. 1. *They are the members of Christ.* They are united to him by faith, and he to them by his spirit. Christ is their head, and they his members; *one with Christ*, Joh. xvii. 23. *I in them and they in me.* As the father and son are one essentially, so Christ and believers are one mystically; what greater dignity can be put upon a creature than to be a real member of Jesus. 2. *They are the sons of God*, Joh. i. 12. Sons by adoption. Mens servants, though dear to them, are not their sons; but all God's servants are his sons, 1 Joh. iii. 1. Eternity will be short enough to meditate upon this glory. 3. *They are heirs to all the promises*; 2 Pet. i. 4. To be the heir of one promise, is more than to be the possessor of the world. The great promise is, *I will be thy God*; all other promises are but as so many fruitful branches, springing from this root. 4. *They have all the attributes of God as their portions.* *The Lord is my portion* saith my soul, Lam. iii. 24. Whatsoever is in an infinite God, is the inheritance of all his people; his mercy is theirs to pardon them; his truth to plead for them; his power to defend them; his goodness to supply them. All the virtue of his arm, all the affection of his bowels, all the depths of his wisdom, are theirs, as they stand in need of any of these; all that God doth is for them; all that God hath, is laid up as an eternal portion for them. The uses.

I. For Examination. It should put all upon a diligent enquiry, whether we be the people of God or not. take three characters. 1. *God's people are a plain hearted people.* *Jacob was a plain man*, Gen. xxv. 27. It's not to be understood of outward condition but inward simplicity; it's opposed to *Esau*, who was crafty. God's people are men that dare not willingly dissemble, Isa. lxiii. 8. *They are my people, children that will not*

lie. Men that dare by design play the hypocrite, equivocate, dissemble, put on all forms, that have *Jacob's* voice, and *Esau's* hands; have God in the mouth, and the devil in their heart; these are none of God's people, his people are like *Nathaniel*. *Israelites indeed in whom is no guile*, Joh. i. 47. and Rev. xiv. 7. 2. *They are a heavenly minded people*, have their hearts set on God; *this is the generation of them that seek thy face O Jacob*, Psl. xxiv. 6. They have their thoughts on the things of God, Phil. iii. 20 *Our conversation is in Heaven from whence we look for a Saviour*. Wicked men are continually groveling on the earth, but Saints are always looking upward; no thoughts are so pleasing to them, as thoughts of God; but 'tis said of the wicked, that *God is not in all their thoughts*, Psl. x. 4. They take no pleasure in divine discourses, in divine meditations; 'tis tiresome to them to spend any long time in matters of this nature; but God's people desire to spend eternity in such objects, and are angry with themselves that they cannot with more seriousness and frequency converse with God; their hearts are full of heaven, and all their affections run out that way. 3. *God's people are an humble people*; high in their privileges, but low in their affection. Lord I am Hell, thou art Heaven, said a holy martyr. Wicked men and hypocrites are very high in their own opinion; *God I thank thee, that I am not like other men*, Luk. xviii. 11. The people of God think highly of others, vilely of themselves; *I am not meet to be called an Apostle*, 1 Cor. xv. 9. *I am the least of the Apostles, I am the very chief of sinners*, 1 Tim. i. 15. *I am but dust and ashes*, saith *Abraham*, Gen. xviii. latter end. *I am more brutish than any man*, saith *Agur*, Prov. xxx. 2. Sinful *John Bradford* was the frequent conclusion of that holy man's letters. Self-debasement is an infallible character of the people of God; they have some knowledge of God's greatness, and of their own naughtiness, and both these make them low.

II. For Exhortation. Carry yourselves as becometh God's people. 1. *Do nothing without God's advice*, Prov. iii. 6. To undertake any work without consulting God, is to profess that you are none of his. *Abraham's* servant would first advise with his great master, Gen. xxiv. 12, your relation to God lays this injunction upon you. God disclaims those as none of his, who make themselves their only counsellors. 2. *Design God's honour in all you do.*

It becomes Saints to seek God's glory, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. Honour him with your parts and your graces. Self-seeking is unworthy the people of God. 3. *Be contented to be at his disposing.* To be what and where God will, give a blank paper into his hand, and let him write what he pleaseth; what if God set others higher than thee? Psl. xlvii. 4. or make others richer thee? or deprive thee of thy dearest comfort? Murmur not, thou art his; may not I do what I will with my own? Pray for the continuance of good, for the removal of evil, but conclude with thy Saviour, *not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Universal submission to God is comely for Saints. 4. *Do not alienate thyself from God,* not to satan, nor the world; thou art one of God's people, 'tis sacrilege to obey any other Lord; we must not be servants of sin, nor of the devil; when tempted to any villany, reason thus with thyself. Is it fit for the people of God to swear, or to deceive? God's people are an holy people; though God did not make them his for their holiness, yet he did, that they might be holy, Eph. v. 27. *Alexander* would not have a coward called by his name. God will not own unholy men for his people. 5. *Be very humble.* You were not made God's people because you were better than others, but because he would magnify his love to you. Spiritual privileges only work right when they make your heart humble, Sam. vii. 18.

III. For Consolation. 1. *You may expect provision from God* of grace, of comfort, of glory, and all this suitable to a God, 1 Tim. v. 8. 2. *Protection in trouble,* Is. xliii. 1, 2. Isa. lxiii, 8. 3. *Preservation from the encroachments of others.* 4. *The audience of your prayers,* Mic. vii, 7. You that are not God's people, labor to become his people, none knows whether he be not God's by election. *Pray to God,* Hos. i. 10. *lay hold on Christ.* Yield yourselves to God in a holy life

II. *That Christ is the glory of all God's Israel.* He is the glory of the natural Israel. To them he was chiefly promised, of them he was born, for he was Rom. i. 3. *The son of David, according to the flesh.* Amongst them was he educated and brought up, with them he lived, amongst them he preached and wrought his great miracles, and therefore is properly called their glory. And he is the glory of all the spiritual Israel. Christ is called *the glory of the Lord,*

Isa. xl. 5. and c lx. 1: *The Lord of glory*, in 1 Cor. ii. 8. and Jam. ii. 1. and here *the glory of Israel*, I shall shew you.

I. The nature of glory.

II. How Christ is his peoples glory.

1. The nature of glory. Glory is the resplendency of some solid and eminent good. There are three things concurring to glory. 1: *The foundation of it is something good.* Goodness and glory are *Synonyma* in scripture. *I beseech thee, shew me thy glory*, Exod. xxxiii. 18. v. 19. *I will make all my goodness pass before thee.* That which Moses calls glory, God calls goodness. Nor is it every good, but some solid and enduring good, which is the foundation of glory; the Hebrew word for glory signifies weightiness or solidity, to teach us it must be a good that hath some weight in it, which makes up glory; *weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. The same word in Hebrew which signifies shame, signifies also lightness, because such things as are light and worthless, are dishonourable. 2. *The good which is the foundation of glory must be excellent.* Ordinary good may be laudable, but it cannot properly be called glorious; we do not affix the name of glory to any thing which hath not some transcendancy in it. 3. *There must be a resplendency and shining forth of that eminence, else it cannot be glorious*, because glory is the bright shining forth of excellency. Pearls in the sea are precious, but not glorious, till they be polished and sparkle out their brightness. The sun is not glorious when obscured with a cloud, but when the beams shine out. A bright-shining day, we call a glorious day.

II. Christ is the glory of his people, because, 1. *He is the procurer of all their glory.* *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God*, Psl. lxxxvii. 3. The Sanctuary of God is called a *glorious high throne*, Jer. xvii. 12. The people of God, in their enjoyments are called *Glory* in the abstract, Isa. iv. 5. Now whatsoever priviledge belongs to the people of God, they have it by the procurement of Christ, Eph. i. 3. see then. *Election.* This is one of their fundamental glories. Others are past by, they are chosen, they are chosen to life. In this they are advanced above all mankind besides; thus glory is in and by Christ, Eph. i. 4. *Justification.* Its the glorious privilege of God's people

that they have obtained this grace, not to have their sins imputed, but all their guilt done away, and themselves made righteous in the sight of God. Guilt is the only shame of the soul: the removal of guilt, and the application of righteousness, makes the soul very glorious, Isa. lxi. 10. Now this glory is the sole procurement of Christ: God justifies his people in and through him, he is therefore called, *the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. *Sanctification*. It's the great privilege of the people of God, to be renewed with grace, Psl. xlv. 13. this glory no wicked man enjoys. Now this is the procurement of Christ, *Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. *Adoption*. It's the greatest honor of Saints to be made the sons of God; though by nature they are enemies, yet by grace they are children; 1 Joh. iii. 1. To be a servant of God is glorious, but to be a son is the highest glory; now this is by Christ, he that is the son of God by nature, makes us sons by grace, Eph. i. 5. *Salvation*. This is the highest privilege men are capable of, to enjoy everlasting communion with God, to see his face and behold his glory; now this glory is ours, because Christ is ours, 1 Pet. v. 10. *The God of all grace who hath called us into his eternal glory by Jesus Christ*; had not Christ been ours, eternal life had not, *God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his son*. We can name no spiritual privilege, but it must be owned as the procurement of Christ. All the graces, all the promises, all the pearls of a christian's crown, are the purchase of Jesus; he hath made us Kings and Priests, Rev. i. 16. 2. *He is the maintainer of their glory. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side*, Psl. lxxi. 21. The same Christ that doth purchase our glory, doth increase and maintain it; *thou maintainest my lot*, Psl. xvi. 5. Christians would soon lose all their glory, if Christ did not maintain it to them, and them in it; he maintains their graces and comforts; he sets the crown upon their head, and he keeps it on, or it would presently fall. 3. *He is the matter of their glory*. All a christian's glory may be summed up in this short sentence, *Christ is mine*. Take away Christ, and you have stript a christian of all his glory, *Christ is all in all*, Col. v. 11. and, *I desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. *Paul speaking of the ceremonies*

of the law, saith, that *the body is Christ*, Col. ii. 17. We may say of all the glory of a believer, that the body is Jesus. If we consider justification, it is Christ's righteousness imputed; or sanctification, it is Christ's holiness imparted; or salvation, it is Christ fully enjoyed; *Christ in you the hope of glory*, Col. i. 27. *Christ is their King*. Believers have the honor to be his subjects, Zach. ix. 9. A good King is the glory of his people; wicked Kings are the shame of theirs. Christ hath all qualifications of a glorious King; he is a wise, a merciful, a high-born, a bountiful, and a holy King. *Christ is their head*. Believers have the honor to be members of his: God hath given him to be their head, Eph. i. 22. Is it not honorable to have such a head? Christ is the head of principalities and power, and they glory in it; believers have much more honor to glory in him, for by virtue of Christ's head-ship over them, they are *made one with God*, which is the highest glory a creature is capable of. *Christ is their husband*. The husband is either the glory or the dishonor of his wife. *He hath married her unto himself, in truth, in faithfulness, and in mercy*, Hos. ii. 19, 20. and he is so excellent a husband, that the soul married to him, cannot but be glorious.

For Information. 1. *Christ himself is a glorious person*. It was prophesied of *Eliachim*, as a type of Christ, *That they should hang on him all the glory of his Father's house*, Isa. xxii. 24. God hath put on Christ all the glory that is imaginable; *His name shall be called wonderful*, Isa. ix. 6. he is glorious in his person, Heb. i. 3. God and man; never such in the world besides, two natures personally united. He is glorious in his works of creation, redemption, and providence, as he is God; these are his works, as well as the fathers; he is glorious in his offices, never did the offices of King, Priest, Prophet, meet in one person besides; he is glorious in his graces as man, he was full of grace; the spirit was not given to him by measure. The Jews looking on him with a malicious eye, saw no glory in him, Isa. liiii. 2. but to them that study his excellency, he will appear incomparably glorious; *unto you that believe he is an honor*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. He is either blind or malicious that will not see and confess Christ to be every way glorious. 2. *It's no dishonor to be a follower of Christ*. Great personages think they go below themselves to embrace

religion; for them to pray, to follow sermons, and to perform other exercises of religion, they judge a disparagement, see Amos vii. 12, 13. Religion may do well for men of a meaner rank, but for nobles and gentlemen it's too great a stain; but the real following of Christ, is the greatest dignity that mortal man is capable of, *let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted*, Jam. i. 9. Grace is the highest promotion; grace with disgrace is greatness; religion with reproach is renown, see Heb. xi. 26. and Acts v. 41. *They rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ.* Grace is the true nobility of the soul. A subject of Christ is a higher title than a ruler over men, 1 Chro. iv. 9. 8. *They can have no true honor that want Christ.* A man may be born of great blood; and to great possessions, yet if Christ be not his, he is a stranger to true glory. *Since thou wast precious in mine eyes, thou hast been honorable*, Isa. xliii. 4. *Antiochus Epiphanes* is called a vile person, Dan. xi. 21. his outward glory made him illustrious, his wickedness rendered him vile. *Arise, shine for thy light is come and the glory of the God is risen upon me*, Isa. lx. 1. Till Jesus be risen upon the soul, it inherits nothing but shame. Wicked men are called by all dishonorable names; *dross*, Ps. cxix. 119. *reprobate silver* Jer. vi. ult. A Christless man is in the heraldry of Heaven, the very off-scouring of the world. 4. *The glory of God is the best glory.* Men glory in their wealth, of birth, or beauty, or children, or titles of honour; these are all good things in themselves, and have some kind of glory; but a child of God hath a better foundation of glory. *Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of my head*. Ps. lxxiii. 3. *This is lasting glory*, wealth, titles, &c. last not, doth the crown endure to generations? Prov. xxvii. 24. but Christ abideth for ever. *This is soul-satisfying glory.* Other glory satisfies not, *Hamán* wanted *Mordecai's* knee, wanting that, all his riches was nothing to him. Est. v. 11. 12, 13. *This is glory that commends us to God, and is glory in the other life*, Ps. xlix. 16, 17. It made Paul neglect all external glories to triumph in Christ, Phil. iii. 4, &c.

For Exhortation. 1. *Acknowledge all your glory to be from him.* The pride of men is so great, that they are not willing to own Christ for their raiser, they attribute all their glory to themselves, this is injurious to Christ: the elders in heaven attribute all their glory to him, and accordingly

give glory to him. Rev. v. 9. 10 All things will be more dear to you, when they are considered as the procurements of Christ. 2. *Be not ashamed of Christ*, disown him not for fear of trouble or danger. It was *Peter's sin* to deny Christ. for fear of the Jews; the truths, the name, the ordinances, the sabbaths of Christ, and every thing of his, are an honor to saints, and honorable in themselves. See what Christ hath said of them that deny him, Mar. viii. 38. *He that is ashamed of me and my words, of him will I also be ashamed before my Father.* See Acts v. 29. Let Pagans be ashamed of their dung-hill God's, let Turks be ashamed of their Mahomet, but let not christians be ashamed of Christ, or any of his truths. 3. *Glory in him wherever you come.* Men are usually setting out their glory in every company; if they have any great kindred, or excellent possessions, they are continually speaking of them; how should christians glory in Christ? *my soul shall make her boast of the Lord* Psl xxxiv. 2. *whom have I in heaven but thee?* Psl. lxxiii. 25. you may glory inordinately, and immoderately in all worldly things, but you can never glory sufficiently in Christ. 4. *Labour to be a glory to Christ.* Saints are called God's glory, Isa. xlv. 13. *And the glory of Christ.* 2 Cor. viii. 23. Eminent saints are a glory not only to the church, but to Christ himself; *hast thou not considered my servant Job?* c. i. 8. *Job* boasts that he hath such a master, and God that he hath such a servant, such as are full of grace study to spend; and be spent for Christ, they glorify Jesus and make him better esteemed in the world. This is the souls greatest glory. All the glory you bring to Christ here, will be your own hereafter. 5. *Let no temptation draw you from him.* Change not the true for any false religion; *Hath a nation changed their Gods that are no Gods?* but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Jer. ii. 11. Whatever religion or opinion, amongst those that are called christians, derogates from Christ, is a false religion. *Arminians* derogate from the satisfaction of Christ's blood, by annexing the merit of works. *Socinians* from his priestly office, by denying the merit of his blood. *Arians* from his person, by denying his divinity. All the up-start opinions amongst us, though accounted christians, militate against the glory of some of his offices, therefore reject them. 6. *Be careful to secure your*

interest in Christ. Prove that he is yours, and that you are his. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. All your glory depends on him, if he be not yours, you can inherit nothing but shame here and everlasting shame hereafter.

For Consolation. 1. *In the want of external glory,* Its the portion of the saints oftentimes to be destitute of all worldly glory. They have neither riches, nor honors, nor any worldly promotions, but if Christ be yours, you have glory enough. A child of God hath greater honor than crowns, scepters, &c. these are dying glories, ill gotten, and ill used sometimes; but Christ is the believer's honor, he weighs down all other glory. It's some disparagement to Christ, that those who enjoy interest in him, should complain for want of other honor. When thou hearest men boasting of such and such things, set thy Christ against all their glory, and thou mayst not envy them, nor wish thyself in a better condition. 2. *In case of disgraces.* It's the lot of God's people to be villified in the world; *we are the off-scouring of all things* 1 Cor. iv. 13. Christ can give you glory enough to gild over these reproaches. There's enough in him to make a christian not only content, but even rejoice in reproaches. Let men revile defame and study to put all the ignominy that they can upon a christian, while Christ is his glory, they can never take away his Crown.

SERMON XXXIII. LUK. 4.---10.

"If thou knewest the gift of God."

THE words are a part of a heavenly discourse, between Jesus and a Samaritan woman; he, in return to Galilee, passeth through Samaria, being weary with travelling, he sits down at Jacob's well to repose himself, while his disciples went to buy meat. A poor woman comes to the well to draw water; our Saviour being come to seek and to save that which was lost, having such an opportunity, enters into discourse with the woman; he first asks her to give him a little cold water to drink, v. 7. where observe the great poverty of Christ, he that gives to others the water of life, is fain to drink common water. *Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty*

might be made rich, 2 Cor. viii. 9. The woman denies this small favor, with a question v. 9. How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria; similiar to what uncharitable people say to poor strangers, that he should go to his own country, and there get relief; to this question our Saviour replies, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. In which he preaches himself to her as the Saviour, and it may be divided into two parts. 1. A precious mercy, called here a gift. 2. The donor of this gift; not man, nor any creature, but God himself. These afford us this lesson, viz. *That Christ is the gift of God to his people.* By the gift of God is meant Christ, is evident from the next clause, *who it is that saith unto thee give me drink.* i. e. I that say unto thee give me to drink, am no other than the gift of God. If we search the Scripture we shall find that whenever mention is made of Christ, the manner of conveyance is by gift, Joh. iii. 16. *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son,* Isa. xlii. 6. *I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles,* Eph. i. 22. *He gave him to be the head of all things to the church,* Joh. vi. 32. *My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.* In the opening this I shall shew.

I. That Christ can be no other than a gift.

II. The moving cause in God of this gift.

III. What an excellent gift Christ is:

IV. How Christ is said to give himself.

V. Whether Christ be given to all men indifferently; if not, to whom is he given?

I. That Christ can be no other than a gift; viz. *He must either be by gift, or by purchase, or by force:* but he is not ours, either by force, or by purchase, therefore he is ours by free gift, 1. *Christ is not ours by force.* We could neither extort him from the father by violence, nor steal him by fraud, he is *the Son of his Father's bosom,* Joh. i. 18. The bosom is a place of affection and security. Should any creature have approached the bosom of God, to have taken away this jewel, either by violence or fraud, God's wrath would presently have flamed out upon the attemptor,

and consumed him. A man may have his child taken from him, either by violence or fraud; but it is impossible that God should be deprived of his son by any of these ways. And besides, Christ is God of equal power with the Father, and it is not possible, that either force or fraud should prevail over an all-powerful God. *Laban's Gods* were taken away by stealth, Gen. xxxi. 34. *Idol Gods* are liable to force and fraud, but the true God cannot be endangered by either of these means, 2. *Nor ours by purchase.* We find nothing in scripture of God making over Christ by sale, but by gift. There are four things to prove that Christ cannot be ours by purchase. *It's a very great derogating from the liberality of God.* He is a God of munificence, *he giveth liberally to all*, Jam. i. 5. It's too far below him, to set his benefits to sale; he needs nothing which creatures have to give; *of him, and from him, and by him, are all things*, Rom. xi. 36. It's an implicit denial of the bounty of God, to think that he should sell his son to the world. *Man's indigency.* Man is a beggarly creature, he hath not wherewith to purchase the least common blessing, much less so great a treasure as Christ. Had God set his son upon a price, all the revenues of the world, if paid to eternity, could not have amounted to one minutes purchase, Mic. vi. 7. If all the mountains in the world were diamonds, if all the dust of the earth were gold of *Ophir*, if all the vast circumference of heaven were piled up with pearls and precious stones, all this would not be worth the least part of Jesus; should all the sons of men, and all the angels of heaven be sold for slaves, the price of all would not be worth the border of Christ's garment. And besides, whatsoever man hath to give is God's already, Psl. l. 12. *Christ was given in the purpose of God before man was:* the patent was sealed from eternity; albeit the actual donation was in the fulness of time. It is said of Christ, in his God-head, that *his goings forth have been of old from everlasting*, Mic. v. 2. Creatures that are but of yesterday, cannot purchase decrees that have been from eternity. *Christ is the purchaser of man, and therefore men cannot be the purchasers of Christ*, Acts xxiii. 28. The redemption of the church is by the purchase of Christ's blood; heaven itself, is called a *purchased possession*, Eph. i. 14. there's no purchaser of this

possession but Christ. Now it's a contradiction to say that Christ is the purchaser of the church, and yet to affirm the church to be the purchaser of Christ.

H. The moving cause in God of this gift. *The love of God*, Joh. iii. 16. *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.* Jesus is a garment spuit out of the bowels of divine love. It was love that made the eternal decree; that made the promise, and nothing but love that actually sent him forth. *God commendeth his love to us in that, when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* The school-men speak of a two-fold love of God; an antecedent and a subsequent love, the former they call a love of compassion, the latter of complacency; this latter love is the purchase, not the cause of Christ. God cannot love any of lost mankind with a love of delight, but as he beholds them in Christ. Eph. i. 6. *God hath made us accepted in the beloved;* this love of acceptance is for and through Christ, but the love of pity was what fetcht Christ out of the bosom of the Father. God seeing our misery pitied us, was unwilling we should be for ever miserable, and this pity excited him to save us by the satisfaction of his son. Esék. xvi. 5, 6, 7, *we did not pity ourselves, no other creature pitied us but the God of pity had compassion on us and drew his son out of his bosom, that in and through him he might love us with a love of delight.* Christ is the cause of his father's delight, and the fruit of his compassion to the world.

III. The nature of this gift. 1. *It is a gift accompanied with the special favor of God.* God may give men other things, and yet hate their persons; he may give a man wealth, and afterwards cast him into hell, as the rich glutton in the Gospel; or honour and yet continue to be his enemy, so *Haman*; or knowledge of all outward things, and afterwards condemn him, so the heathen Philosophers; but to whomsoever he gives Christ, he gives all the affection of his heart, Eph. i. 6. God may be angry with a person to whom he hath given his son, but he cannot hate him, the enmity between God and man is for ever done away when Christ is bestowed. 2. *It is an eternal gift.* God may bestow other gifts, and afterwards remove them; he gave a great estate to *Job*, and took it away again, Job. v. He gave the Crown to *Saul*, and retook it for the abuse of it: he gives men children, and they live to see them all die;

but those to whom Christ is given, enjoy him for ever; death, that strips a man of all other things, puts him into a more glorious possession of Christ than he had before: it is a gift without repentance, Rom. xi. 22. 3. *It's a soul-satisfying gift.* Other gifts do not satisfy the soul; *Wherefore do ye lay out money on that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?* Isa. lv. 2. No external gift can fill the desires of the soul, it hath a capacity still of desiring and receiving more, but the soul who once knows himself to be possessed of Christ, cannot make any other request to God. Gen. xxxiii. 11. *Esau saith I have much*, v. 9. but *Jacob saith I have all.* 4. *It's a comprehensive gift.* The soul shall never be able to number up all the gifts comprized in this rich cabinet, Cant. i. 13, 14. because so many gifts are bundled up in this one gift, also Eph. i. 3.; the epitome of all gifts is Jesus. As *Leah* said, *a troop cometh*, Gen. xxx. 11. so when Christ comes, the soul may say more properly, *a troop cometh.* When scripture speaks of Jesus, it usually mentions a variety of gifts, 1 Cor. i. 30. *He is made to us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption.* With Christ all the promises, the graces, the spiritual privileges are given; especially pardon, peace and salvation, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Other gifts are little in much, but Jesus is much in a little; yea, *all in all.* 5. *It's a gift that sanctifies all others.* There is no sweetness in them without this; yea, they are snares and curses without this: wealth without Christ is the greatest poverty; health the worst sickness; honor the greatest disgrace. God gives nothing in mercy till he give Christ; he that hath Christ enjoys what he wants, and he that wants Christ hath not what he enjoys. *Lord, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless*, Gen. xv. 2. *Abraham* must have had a child, or he could have had no Christ, for *Messiah* was to come out of his loins, Gen. xii. 3. he knew all he had was too little if God should not add Christ; that's a fearful imprecation, Ps. lxix. 22. *Let their table become a snare, and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap;* this will be the result of all other gifts; without Christ they will be like *Absolom's* Mule and locks, the certain ruin of him that receives them. *Solomon* saw a great vanity, namely, *riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt*, Eccl. v. 13. All that a man hath will hurt him if God bestow not this gift on him. This is the celestial salt that seasons and

sweetens all. 6. *It gives a man a spiritual right to all other gifts.* We have a civil right in outward gifts. The ten commands fully asserts propriety, but we have no spiritual propriety till we have Christ. *Adam's sin lost his right to the creatures, which is restored by Christ; now until a man hath an interest in Christ, he is in a spiritual sense, but an usurper of what he enjoys; this gift reinvests him into a true propriety to all worldly enjoyments, All things are yours, and ye are Christs,* 1 Cor. iii. 22. 23. such enjoy all other gifts, not only by the tenure of common providence, but of special promise.

IV. How Christ is said to give himself, when he is the gift of the Father, see Gal. i. 4, and Eph. v. 25. Christ is both the donor and gift. 1. *Christ as God doth whatsoever the Father doth.* The work of man's redemption by Christ is an external work, and so it was both decreed and contrived by the joint consent of all the Trinity. 2. *Christ did voluntarily submit himself to this work.* The Son is God equal in power and authority to the Father; no law could be imposed upon him without his own voluntary consent; the Father could not have given him, if he had not given himself, see Psl. xl. 7. Covenant, see Isa. liii. 10.

V. Whether Christ was indifferently given to all men, or to some only in particular, note, 1. *That all mankind hath some benefit by Christ.* The world would presently have been destroyed, if the promise of Christ had not been interposed; the worst of men have the benefit of being and preservation by this gift. 2. *Christ as a redeemer is not intended for all, but only for the elect:* which is clear because, (1.) *Christ is given as a covenant.* Now all are not even outwardly in covenant with God, and all who are outwardly, are not inwardly, for some live and die strangers to the covenant. (2.) *Christ is given to none but to such as are given to him,* see them distinguished from the world, Joh. xvii. 6. (3.) *All to whom Christ is given shall be saved.* God cannot lose his intention; but all shall not be saved, Joh. vi. 37. (4.) *Christ is given only to his seed,* Isa. liii. 10. but some are the serpents seed. (5.) *All those to whom Christ is given by the Father, are in time united to him,* but all are not united to Christ, nor Christ to them. Most of the texts brought by Arminians, have something in the context that necessarily restrains the

universal term to a certain number or kind, as 1 Tim. ii. 6. which speaks not of *all* individuals, but of *all* sorts and degrees of men, as is clear from v. 1, 2. and Heb. ii. 9. a place much insisted on. The term "*every man*" is necessarily restrained to some particular men, who are in v. 10. called many sons; every man that is a son did Christ taste death for, and v. 11; this "*every man*" are they that are sanctified, and are brethren to Christ. Now we deny not that Christ tasted death for every one of these; so Joh. ii. 2, is clearly restrained by the context; *world* is put for *Gentiles* in opposition to *Jews*, not for every particular man in the world; and besides, the word *advocate*, v. 1. tells us the sense of *propitiation*. One part of the Priestly office of Christ is not to be extended farther than the other. *Advocate* and *propitiation* are its two parts; *advocate* notes his intercession; *propitiation* his satisfaction, and why his satisfaction should be extended further than his *intercession* I see no reason, both of them belonging to the same office. Now he is not an advocate to all, Joh. xvii. 9. therefore he is not a propitiation for all. If it be said, Christ prayed for those that were not elected, as Luk. xxiii. 34. we must distinguish between the prayers of Christ as man, of which that was one, and his prayers as Mediator; that prayer Joh. xvii. is made by Christ as Mediator, yet from his intercession in that prayer some are expressly excluded.

I. Information. It teacheth the *freeness of our salvation*. Papists talk of meriting heaven, they will have eternal life, not as God's gift, but man's purchase, but see Röm. vi. ult. *eternal life is the gift of God*. Christ, the meritorious cause of our salvation, is the gift of God. *This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*, 1 Joh. v. 11. We are not able by any power of our own, to beg salvation nor to accept of its tenders, without power from God, therefore are we utterly unable to purchase salvation. To deny salvation to be free, is either to deny Christ as the gift of God, or to deny salvation by him. 2. *The exceeding greatness of God's love to mankind*. When Scripture, speaks of the gift of Christ, it mention the love of God, as its foundation. Rom. v. 8. *God commends his love for us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*, 1 Joh. iv. 9. 19. *In this was manifested the love of God, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him*,

&c. and Eph, ii. 7. 1. *Consider the relation of the gift to the donor.* What Christ is to God, not his servant, nor his friend, but his Son. How much in this that God should give his Son? and consider what manner of Son he is. *He is his own Son*: not an adoptive but a natural Son. *He that spared not his own Son*, Rom. viii. 32. who is the express image and character of his own person; *He is his only Son*. For one that hath many sons, to part with one, is an act of mighty love. *Jacob* mourns for one with a bitter mourning, though he had then eleven more alive, and was not certain of the others death, Gen. xxxvii. 34, 35. but for a man that hath but one son, to part with him is admirable indeed: herein *Abraham* testified his obedience, Gen. xxii. 17. *Now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.* God hath but one Son, and yet he was willing to part with him for the good of his elect. *He is a beloved Son*. For a man to part with a son that he doth not much respect, is not any great matter; to give an *Absolom*, an *Adonijah*, a *Reuben* or an *Esau*, is not much to be wondered at, but to part with a *Benjamin*, a beloved son, this is love indeed. *Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest.* Gen. xxii. 1. Christ is God's *Isaac*, his *Benjamin*, a son that never displeased him, 2 Pet. i. 17. *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* All the motives which persuade a father to love his son, persuade God to love Christ. If a Father have many children, he usually loves that best who is most like to him. Christ is the consubstantial Son of the Father, the very *express image of his person*, Heb. i. 3. and Phil. ii. 6. *in the form of God*. He is as like the Father as the Father is like himself. There is no perfection in the Father, but the same is substantially in the Son; not only similitude but identity of nature, *I and my Father are one*, not only one in will and consent, as Arians say, but one in essence: also a Father's heart is much drawn out towards his child, if he see amiableness in him. Now Jesus is very amiable in himself. The church which hath but very dim eyes, is able to see his loveliness so as to be enamoured with him. Psl xlv. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, and Cant. v. 10. *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand*, but the eyes of God, which are able to see all his excellencies; can discover infinite worth, beauty, wisdom, and strength, yea

the fulness of the God-head, *which dwelleth bodily in him*, Col. ii. 9, therefore he cannot but love him with an infinite love; agzin the natural affection of parents multiply towards a child, if they see a return of love, they love the child if he have little love to them, *O Absalom, my son, my son, my son, Absalom*. God compares his love to his people, to the love of a father toward a *son that serveth him*, Mal. iii. 17. Now Christ is a Son that bears as much affection to the Father, as the Father to him. As the Father loves him with an infinite and eternal love, so he loves the Father with an equal love. Ambrose says consider the great love of God in giving us Christ, he did as it were run the hazard of losing his son, that he might not lose thee; of making himself childless, to save thee from perishing. God hath so much care of thy salvation, that he did as it were run the hazard of endangering his own, that he might gain thee. *Consider what Christ was given to undergo. He gave him to minister to us*, Mat. xx. 28. He that was and is the Creator came in the form of a servant, to be a servant to man, if he had given his Son to have been a great earthly monarch, it had been great love, but that he should be a servant to his vassals is love unspeakable. *He gave him to pay our debts*; man by sin was deeply indebted to justice, and if he and all he had, had been sold, he could not have paid the least farthing, and yet all must be discharged or man must be for ever damned; for the payment of these great sums, was Christ given by the Father. God hath *laid on him the iniquity of us all*, Isa. liii. 6. *He gave him to be a servant to his own law*, Gal. iv. 4. He that was the supreme absolute law-giver, came to fulfil the righteousness of the law for us, to live under the obedience of his own law. *He came to suffer hunger, and cold, and other necessities of this life*; he was given to be reproached, villified, spit upon, *to give his back to the smiters, and his cheek to them that pulled off the hair*, Isa. 1. 6. *A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*, Isa. liii. 3. That he was given to be a man of delight, was great humiliation, but to be a man of sorrows, was low humiliation indeed. *He was given to die for us*. A cruel, a cursed, a shameful death, Gal. iii. 13, he was given to be a sacrifice, to suffer the wrath of God, to endure the torments of hell in his soul, that we might be delivered from those torments; he gave *him to be made sin for us, that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God through*

him, 2 Cor. v. 21. *Consider to whom Christ was given.* Not to Angels, but to men; *to such as were his enemies.* Man was in actual rebellion against God, when Christ came to die for him. We were not only sinners, but adversaries, Rom, v. 10. *When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son.* The greatest love amongst men, is for a man to die for his friends, Joh. xv. 13. God manifested greater love than this, in giving his son when we were enemies. *He was given to such as God certainly knew* would slight and reject him; it was much to give him undesired and undeserved, but more to give him to such as should despise him, Isa. liii, 2, 3. *He is despised and rejected of men,* he never yet came to any of his elect, but he found contempt from them; put altogether and it will argue great love in God to mankind. 3. *That the salvation of the elect is a thing well pleasing unto God the Father,* Isa. liii. 10, *The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* It is well-pleasing to God, because it tends to his honor. Whatsoever Christ hath done, or suffered for, or promised to his elect, cannot but be very well-pleasing to God.

II. Exhortation. 1. To such as actually possess this gift; *Bless God for it,* Eph. i. 3. you had been lost without it. *Be contented to want other gifts.* Though God hath not given you riches nor honors, if you have Christ, you have what countervails all. All had been nothing without him, he will abundantly supply all other wants; when others boast of their wealth, or strength, you boast of your Christ. *Give yourselves more to him that hath given Christ to you.* God hath given you his best, his all, when he gave Christ; give yourselves then all to God, Rom. vi. 13. All you have will not equalize God's gift to you. *Improve this gift:* make use of all that is in him; use him for justification, for sanctification; use his wisdom, power, grace and merit: this gift serves the soul for all turns. 2. To them that want this gift; *beg for him.* You are undone without him. Give me Christ or else I die. *Refuse not Christ.* This is the world's sin, God offers, man rejects. *All they that hate him love death,* Prov. viii. 36. God is willing to give, man is unwilling to receive this gift; God cannot now save him that rejects Christ. Stand in the way, leave your sins, be willing to have him on God's terms, and he shall be yours; all you have will not suffice without Christ; all you have is a curse without Christ. Say to God

as this woman did to Christ, *v. 15.* she came to *Jacob's* well without Christ, she went away with this gift. Tarry at *Jacob's* well; God's ordinances; beg Christ earnestly, and God will not deny thee:

III. Consolation. 1. *In case of the want of other things.* Dost thou want riches, children, &c. care not for those wants, if Christ be thine; *why weepest thou Hannah? am not I better than ten sons?* 1 Sam. i. 8. It's great disparagement to Christ to see Saints mourn for want of other things. 2. *Against the fear of thine own unworthiness.* Many Christians put themselves to unnecessary torment about this, they are unworthy of Christ, of heaven, &c. he is the gift of God; thy poverty, thy unworthiness prepared thee to receive him. 3. *Against the fear of being denied the thing thou wantest.* Thou beggest pardon and grace; thou art afraid thou shalt be denied, see Rom. viii. 32. the inference is as strong as may be, he that gave Christ will deny nothing, for nothing is greater than Christ: all the soul wants are virtually in Christ; Christ extended and unfolded is all things else Pardon, peace, comfort, &c. are all in Christ; and besides, Christ hath purchased a right for thee to all other gifts; he being thine by gift, all else are thine by inheritance. God hath given Christ to the church, as a purchaser, and this purchaser hath purchased at a valuable rate all other things for them. Beg in Christ's name, and God will not, cannot deny thee any thing.

SERMON XXXIV. HEB. 12.—2.

"The author and finisher of our Faith."

THE scope of the beginning of this chapter, is to persuade christians to patience under the cross; here are divers considerations, as 1. The cloud of witnesses, all the sufferers in the old and in the new church. 2. The fixing of the eye on Jesus; the martyrs suffered much, but Christ endured more than they all, *v. 2, 3.* Now *Paul* having named him, cannot let him pass without some honorable title, and therefore calls him, the author and finisher of our faith; in which we have, the glorious grace of faith, and the denomination

of Christ in reference to this grace; he is its author and finisher. Faith is put for the doctrine of faith, 1 Tim. iv. 1. but in the text, we are to understand the grace of special faith; *the grace that bears us up in trials*, it's brought in as a comfort to saints, who are apt to think, that by long trials their faith will be shaken, *Paul* would support them against this fear, by telling them that Christ is the author and finisher of their faith. *The Apostle speaks of looking to Jesus*, in the beginning of the v. Looking to Jesus is an act of saving faith, Zech. xii. 10. Faith is the soul's eye which looks to Christ in all straights for help. Christ is called the author or finisher of this grace, *the author*, 'tis in the Greek the beginner *Beza* renders it the captain of our faith, and *Calvin* the prince of our faith. *Erasmus* dislikes that reading, as losing the elegance of the phrase, and therefore he renders it, the beginner of our faith, and he is called the finisher of our faith, as being he that brings it to perfection; he is as *Erasmus* speaks, the author of the beginning, and the end or consummation of our faith. The doctrine will be, *that Christ is both the author and finisher of faith in his people. I am Alpha and Omega*, Rev. i. 11. 'tis as much as *I am true and very God*; the words are taken from Isa. xlv. 6. *I am the first, I am the last, and besides me there is no God*. It may be truly said of Christ, in regard of saving faith, he is the *Alpha* and the *Omega* of it. Here I shall shew,

I. Open the nature of saving faith.

II. Shew why Christ is called its author.

III. That Christ is its finisher as well as author.

I. For the nature of saving faith. It's a special gift of grace wrought by the Holy Ghost, through the preaching of the word, in the heart of a regenerate person, whereby he is enabled to cast himself on Christ, for life and salvation, according to the promise of the Gospel. 1. 'Tis a gift, Phil. i. 29. and Eph. ii. 8. there would never have been a beleiver if it had not been given to him from above. *A gift of grace*. If a gift it must needs be of grace. Acts xvii. 27. believing is said to be *through grace*, faith is the new creaturè, a principal and chief part of it, and therefore must needs be of grace. 'Tis called *a man's own faith*. Heb. ii. 4. 'Tis our own *subjectively*, but in its origine it is of grace. 'Tis a *special gift*. To distinguish it from the Historical and

temporary faith, and those common gifts, bestowed on such as may be damned, Heb. vi. 4. 'Tis called *saving faith*, because whoever hath it shall be saved. 'Tis wrought by the *Holy Ghost, through the preaching of the word*. This shews both the efficient cause and the instrumental; the efficient cause is, *the Spirit of faith*, 2 Cor. v. 13. The instrumental is the word preached, Rom. x. 17. called, *the word of faith* Rom. x. 8. and therefore is faith called, *the fruit of the lips*, Isa. lvii. 19. because wrought by the preaching of the word. 'Tis wrought in the heart of a regenerate person; called *the faith of God's elect*, Tit. i. 1. because it is bestowed only upon the elect, and the proper special subject of it is the heart of man, Rom. x. 10. *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness*. The will rather than the understanding is the seat of faith, because faith is an act of election, whereby the soul chooseth and embraces Christ. *It enables the soul to cast itself upon Christ*. This expresseth the very nature of faith, which is recumbency on Christ, cleaving to him for salvation. 'Tis called, *coming to Christ*, 1 Pet. ii. 4. *casting our burthen upon him*, Ps. lv. 22. *hungering and thirsting after him*, Mat. v. 6. which denote the soul's casting itself upon him for life. *All this is according to the promise*. Without the divine promise, there can be no believing; this encourageth the soul to believe, and shews how to believe, and gives the soul ability to believe: take away the promise, and faith dies presently. The degrees of faith are six.

I. *Knowledge*. 'Tis impossible there should be faith in Christ, or in any thing propounded by him, till there be knowledge both of him and of what he propounds. 'Tis granted that faith and knowledge are two distinct habits, yet knowledge necessarily preceeds faith; faith is the sight of the mind; sight supposeth a visible object, Rom. x. 14. *How shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* Knowledge has precedency of faith, Joh. iv. 10. *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee give me drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, &c.* Knowledge is indeed increased by faith, but there can be no faith without knowledge. Faith is an advised grace, it will not rush headlong into unknown ways, but will have knowledge as a guide to go before it. Christ asked the man lately blind, *dost thou believe in the name of the Son of God?* Joh. ix. 35 to 38. he answers, *and who is he that I may believe on*

him? And when he knows the person, then he believes and worships. Faith is called knowledge, Isa. liii. 11. because there can be no true faith without it. To believe in whom or what we know not, is fancy or presumption, not faith; ignorant faith is no faith.

II. *Assent.* After the knowledge of the thing propounded is wrought in the understanding, then follows assent to it, according as it is known. This is called *the setting of our seal to the divine testimony*, Joh. iii. 33. This is nothing else but the souls firm assent unto the truth revealed. *Abraham*, Gen. xvii. 6. he is said to believe, because he did freely yield his assent to the truth. This assent hath two properties. 1. It is universal to all the divine declaration. 2. It's grounded principally on the authority of God.

III. *Upon this assent is raised up in the soul, a high esteem and strong affection to what is known and assented unto.* The soul puts an high value upon it; according to our appreciation, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Those which have not attained to a high valuation of the things of the gospel, are far short of saving faith.

IV. *Upon these appreciations follow earnest longings to partake of all those excellent things.* Desire of enjoyment is the constant effect of true affection; this is called, *hungering and thirsting*, Isa. lv. 1. He that thirsts not after Christ, and all the good things in him, hath not faith.

V. *Upon these hungerings and longings, follow affiance and confidence.* The soul is wrought to such a frame, that it can come to Christ as a *living stone*, 1 Pet. ii. 4. and upon him, and the promises made by him, is enabled to set down its rest, as upon the only rock of salvation; see Psl. cxii. 7, 8. Here are three words which denote affiance, *fixing, trusting, and establishing of the heart*, this is expressed, Isa. l. 10. by *staying or leaning upon God*, see also Isa. xxvi, 3, 4. and Psl. xxxvii. 5. *By rolling our burthen on the Lord.* As a man bowed down with a great burthen, rolls it off himself on a pillar or seat; so the believing soul rolls off his burthen on Christ, Mat. xi. 8. 6. *Upon this affiance followeth the souls election of what is exhibited in the testimony of God.* The soul freely chooseth the promises of the gospel; this is the highest step of faith, when the soul is not only willing to accept, but to choose the way of God, see Psl. cxix. 30, 31.

I have chosen the way of truth, and Acts xi. 23. That with full purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

II. Christ may be called the author of faith, (not excluding the Father and the Holy Ghost) in six respects. 1. *As he is its foundation* Christ and his righteousness are the fundamental objects of justifying faith; we believe in God the Father, and in God the Holy Ghost, but it is in and through Christ the Mediator. Saving faith is called in Scripture, *the faith of Christ*, Gal. ii. 20. *The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God*, and Eph. iii. 12. *We have access with confidence by the faith of him.* This is as much as faith in Christ, because he is the principal object of this grace; take away him and faith dies presently. 2. *As he is the great appointer of all the means of faith.* The common instrument whereby faith is wrought in the soul, is the word preached, Rom. x. 17. Now who but Jesus is the author of this ministry? Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12. and he it is that doth preserve it, for the accomplishment of his own ends, and therefore he may well be called its author. 3. *As he doth by the power of his spirit begin the work in the soul*, see Col. ii. 12. because he works it in the soul. Now whatsoever the Father doth, the Son doth likewise. Consider the generation of faith, it shews the handy-work of Christ; 'tis he that shews the sinner his guilt, and his own inability to free himself; that propounds himself to the soul, in the fulness of his merit, freeness of his grace, and readiness to accept of sinners; that invites the sinner to cast himself upon him, and that inclines the soul to a willingness, to come out of itself, to deny its own righteousness, and to rest itself on him alone for remission and life. There would never be a disposition to close with Christ, if Christ himself did not begin it in the soul; he moves the very first wheel that stirs towards any such work as faith is, Joh. iv. Christ enters into discourse with the Samaritan woman, shews her, her guilt, *Thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou hast now, is not thy husband*, v. 18. he shews her his readiness to give her the water of life, if she did but desire it, v. 10. and at last works her heart to a closure with him, v. 26. 4. *As he is the procurer of his promises.* The promises are made and revealed, both for the begetting and strengthening of faith. If there had not been promises, there would never have been believing; now *All the promises of God are in him*,

2 Cor. i. 20. They are in him, as the foundation and matter of them; as the purchaser and fulfiller of them. 5. *As he is the purchaser of faith itself.* Grace is as truly the purchase of Christ, as glory; as he hath bought eternal life, for the elect, so he hath bought for them all those graces which make them meet for it; if he had purchased heaven for believers, and not faith to enable men to believe, not one had never come to heaven; as he hath bought repentance and other graces for his people, so he hath purchased faith, to enable them to believe. 6. *As he takes us off from a possibility of being saved by any other way.* The very name of Christ evinces that there can be no other way to heaven than by relying upon him; there are but two ways that ever God appointed, *works* and *faith*. Christ takes us off from relying on the way of works; there had been no need of him if works would have done, Gal. iii. 23, 24. and thereby disposes us to seek salvation by believing.

III. That Christ is the finisher of our faith; this he does 1. *By exciting the habit of faith into act.* As other graces, so is faith perfected this way; the more frequent a christian is, in putting forth acts of faith, the stronger will be its habit and exercises. Now it is Jesus that by his spirit draws out the habit into act, Cant. iv. 16. Christ that did at first set the root of faith in the soul, doth by effectual movings of the spirit, cause the *spices* thereof to *flow out*, and so by producing new acts, perfects the grace of faith. Every act of faith is from Christ, as well as the habit. 2. *By manifesting to the believer the righteousness of faith more and more visibly.* The righteousness of Christ is the object of justifying faith, and it is also a means to increase faith, Rom. i. 17. *The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*, that is, from one degree of faith to another; the more clearly we see the righteousness of God, the more is faith in Christ increased. Now as Christ at first convinces the soul of the excellency, sufficiency, and suitableness of this righteousness to a sinner, so doth he in the preaching of the gospel manifest it more clearly to the soul, and thereby strengthens faith. 3. *By conveying nourishment to the soul from the means of faith.* There are three great helps appointed to strengthen faith; prayer, the word, and the seals. That prayer is a help, see Luk. xvii. 5. Faith and prayer are mutual helps; faith teacheth us how to pray, and prayer helps us in believing. That the word is a help is clear,

because, therein are all the promises, the great feeders of faith. That the sacraments are helps is as evident, for they are *Seals of the righteousness of faith*, Rom. iv. 11. Now Jesus by blessing all these means to the soul, helps it in the work of faith; he makes way for the hearing of our prayers; makes all the promises effectual to us, and by the use of the sacraments communicates strength to us, and so increaseth faith. 4. *By the power of his intercession.* His continual intercession is, that the elect may be brought into a state of faith, and that all believers may believe more and more. *I have prayed for thee that thy faith do not fail*, Luk. xxii. 32. Christ doth not only pray that our faith fail not, but that our faith may be increased. 5. *By shedding abroad the sense of his love into their hearts.* This begets and increaseth faith. Now as Christ did out of love die for the elect, so he is ready on all occasions to manifest this love to them, after they have believed, and by such discoveries faith is much strengthened; when Christ had shewed *Thomas* the prints of the nails, and gave him leave to thrust his hand into his side, his faith was strengthened, *My Lord and my God*, Joh. xx. 28. Jesus is pleased sometimes to open his side to his people, that they may see the workings of his very bowels towards them; and spreads over them the bands of his love, and by these communications puts life into their faith. 6. *By strengthening their union with himself.* 'Tis the privilege of believers, to be implanted into Christ, *I in them, and thou in me*, Joh. xvii. 23. and as he made, so doth he strengthen this union, causing the soul to take deeper root in himself, and making it *grow up into him*, Eph. iv. 15. Now as the soul takes deeper hold in Christ, so much is faith increased there. 7. *By expelling all faith, weakening distempers out of the soul.* There are many things which hinder the growth of faith, every sin, every jealous surmise against God, every distrustful objection are hinderances within; and there are many things without that prejudice faith. Assaulting temptations from Satan, intricate and cross providences which seem to oppose promises, the despairing of others who seemed to believe, Jesus relieves the soul against these; inward distempers are suppressed, jealous thoughts of God are removed, distrustful objections are answered, and the external hinderances are taken away; temptations are beaten back, cross providences

are reconciled to promises, the soul is enlightened to see that such as despaired did never truly believe, and by these means is faith strengthened.

I. For Information, behold, 1. *The excellency of saving faith*, it's called *precious faith*, 2 Pet. i. 1. it produceth rare effects, and serves for precious uses to the soul, it's the eye, foot and hand of the soul; it's a buckler in temptation, a staff in weakness, a cordial in faintings: Christ is its author, and all his works are like himself very extellent, and none more excellent than the work of faith, it's one of the rarest jewels that ever Jesus made. 2. *The necessity of faith*. As it's a rare, so it's a very useful grace. Nothing is well done which is done without it; it's necessary to justification, to consolation, to salvation; there's no pleasing of God without it, Heb. xi. 6. The necessity appears from hence, Christ is its author, and he is so wise that he will not be the author of vain things; whatsoever he hath made is some way or other useful, it's a disparagement to Christ to call any work of his unnecessary or trivial. 3. *The divine Almighty power of Christ*. All his works prove his divinity, none more than faith, see Eph. i. 19. Consider how indisposed, yea how opposite the heart is to faith, what mighty mountains must be removed before it can be wrought in the soul; how much above reason it is to rely on another for salvation, to be clothed by another's garments, and enriched by another's wealth, &c. What a world of mysteries are there in this grace; if Christ were not of infinite power, he could not be the author of such a grace. All the Angels of heaven have not strength enough to work this grace in the heart of one man. 4. *How justly is the whole salvation of the elect attributed to Christ*. He hath purchased the inheritance, and is the worker of faith. Alas! how little is man able to do, as to the procurement of his own salvation! he is so far from purchasing the jewel, that he cannot make the hand that receives it. *God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*, Joh. xv. 11. It is all in and from him, whom the scripture makes the author of our very faith.

II. For Exhortation. 1. *Let all that want faith go to Christ*. There's no author of faith but he; Ministers are his instruments, but he is the author. Whither should men

go for any commodities, but to such as make them? All faith is of Christ's making, you that want this, go to him by prayer, who is its author. Faith is not our but Christ's work, it doth not depend nor hath its rise from man's free-will, but from the free grace of Christ alone; we must go to Christ, not only with, but for faith. 2. *Let none say that they shall never have faith.* When a man considers what a mighty work faith is, how opposite his heart is by nature to it, how many impediments there are to hinder it how long he hath lived under the means of faith without it, how weak the instrumental cause is, he is ready to despair, as if it were impossible for such a grace ever to be wrought in his heart. This text will drive away despair, Christ is the author of it; what cannot he do? let the means be ever so weak, the oppositions ever so strong, the difficulties ever so great, he is able to do what he will. Though thou hast been many years without it, and think you shall never have it, yet Christ is able to remove all the seeming impossibilities, all the oppositions, he can bring faith out of all thy unbelief, and in despite of all thy contradictions, and rejections. Never despair while the work is in Christ's hand; he can do in one hour by a weak Sermon, what thou thinkest impossible to be done. 3. *You that have faith acknowledge from whence it came.* Not from nature, not from yourselves, but from Christ; he that created thy soul, created thy faith; faith is wrought in thee, but not by thee; as thy life is from him, so is thy faith; he that hath purchased all the privileges of believers, hath wrought faith in them to apprehend all those privileges. 4. *Let those who have faith, serve Christ with all their faith.* He is the author, let him be the object of thy faith, believe in him with your faith, Joh. xiv. 1. It's fit your faith should close with him, who hath wrought it in you, to close with himself; Christ hath not wrought faith to lie idle in the soul, put it forth in reference to precepts and promises, use it in prayer, in hearing, in the sacraments, in doing and in suffering; you cannot please its author better than to exercise it upon all occasions; Christ hath wrought it in you that you might believe in him. 5. *Let all that have faith, make much of it.* We should prize this for our own sakes, we can do nothing acceptably without it, neither pray, nor hear, nor repent, nor live nor die without it; and we should prize it for Christ's sake, to slight any thing which he hath made,

is to displease him. We prefer things that are mean, for the author whom we love; this is rich, the author is glorious, prefer it for its own and for the authors sake.

Christ is the finisher of our faith. 1. For Information. (1.) *We stand in need of Christ after, as well as before conversion.* If Christ were only the beginner and not the finisher of faith, it would never come to perfection; we have need of subsequent, as well as of preventing grace. In the first, Christ works without us, we are merely passive; in the after grace Christ works with and in us; though we work with Christ, yet we cannot work without Christ after conversion, see 1 Cor. ii. 8. We as much need the power of Christ for our progress, as for the beginning of grace. (2.) *The impossibility of the total and final loss of saving faith.* Faith may be shaken, and for a time seem to be lost, but it cannot be lost; the doctrine of the total and final loss of faith, is very derogatory to Jesus, it makes him the author, but denies him to be the finisher of faith, see Col. i. 23. Temporary faith is moveable, but true saving faith is well grounded. *They went out from us, but they were not of us, If they had been of us, they would have continued with us,* 1 Joh. ii. 19. If Jesus have sufficient power to carry on what he hath begun, the faith of God's elect shall at last be brought to perfection; Christ will not lose the glory of this title, *the finisher of our faith.* (3.) *What an excellent worker Christ is.* He doth all his works perfectly; not only begins but is pleased to perfect; the greatest work that ever he undertook, was the work of redemption, that would have broken Angels and men, and yet he carried it on to the end. *I have finished the work thou gavest me to do,* Joh. xvii. 4. Bunglers and slothful persons begin many pieces of work, but let them die in their hands; but whatsoever Christ begins, he never leaves till he hath brought it to perfection. 4. *The certainty of the salvation of all believers, They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Father's hands,* Joh. x. 28, 29, and this text shews that Christ is both the author and finisher of faith; *receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls,* 1 Pet. i. 9.

II. For Comfort. 1. *It comforts against the weakness of faith.* It's very sad with many Saints to think how poor their faith is, it's like a *bruised reed or smoking flax,*

a grain of mustard seed, it will not carry them through one temptation, yea, hardly to the end of a prayer; well here is comfort, Jesus will strengthen that weak faith, Phil. i. 6. He that began faith when the soul was unwilling to believe, will finish it, now the soul is willing; the *Alpha* will be the *Omega* of thy faith, and all thy other graces. 2. *Against all the oppositions made against faith.* The Devil labors to destroy faith, this is that which strengthens all other graces; the shield whereby temptations are withstood, Eph. vi. 16. If Satan can destroy faith, he destroys all, the soul looking upon the strength and malice of his enemies, droops as if his faith would never hold out, this text may drive away such fears; how can Christ be the finisher of our faith, if Satan should overthrow it? use diligently all faith in strengthening means, and Christ will bless them to attain the end, he will not take his own name in vain. 3. *Against all the decayings of faith.* Faith is subject to decay; many a Saint thinks all his faith is gone for ever, he could apply promises, now he cannot, &c. Remember Christ is the *finisher of thy faith*, he will revive it. Go to Christ, plead this title in prayer, lay stress upon it, and thou shalt find it is not an empty one.

SERMON XXXV. 1 COR. 10.—4,

“*And that rock was Christ.*”

THE scope of this chapter, is to persuade christians from the public eating of things sacrificed to idols, and from the eating of such meats in their private houses, to the offence of their weak brethren. Of the former he disputes from, v. 1. to 23. which he proves to be altogether unlawful. Of the latter, he treats from v. 23, to 33. which though he grants may be lawfully done in itself, yet when offence may be given to weak brethren it ought to be forborn. *Paul* brings divers arguments to dissuade from the former; namely, that it was not lawful for Christians to have communion with the Gentiles in their idolatrous banquets, which would occasion many sins, and certainly bring many punishments; this he illustrates from what such kind of idolatrous communion brought upon the Jewish church, from v. 1, to 14. that he was sore offended with the Jews for

this sin, v. 5, 6, &c. That God would be as much offended with Christians for the same sin, *Paul* proves, from the parity between the Jewish and the Christian church ; see the four first verses. They had the same privileges, the same covenant, the same seals for substance. The Christian church hath baptism, so had the Jewish ; that which typified our baptism, v. 1, 2. As the Christian church hath *the Lord's supper*, so had the Jewish, at least what was equivalent. They had the same spiritual meat, and the same spiritual drink which Christians have, they had *manna*, which did typify Christ ; our spiritual bread, and the *water out of the rock*, which did typify our spiritual drink ; *They did drink of that spiritual rock which followed them, which rock was Christ*, referring to *Exod. xvii.* 1. Observe that Jesus Christ is a spiritual rock. 2. That the rock in the wilderness was a special type.

Doct. *That Christ is a spiritual rock.* He is not properly a rock, but metaphorically and spiritually. As he is called *the sun, the day-star*, so here a *rock*, we have this name frequently given to God, *Deut. xxxii. 18.* *Of the rock that begat thee thou art unmindful. The rock of Israel spake to me, 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.* *To thee will I cry, O Lord my rock, Psl. xxviii. 1.* To Christ peculiarly, *Isa viii. 14.* *A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence ;* see also *1 Pet. ii. 6.* and *Isa. xxxii. 2.* *the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.* Two things I shall open by way of explication.

I. How Christ is like a rock.

II. How Christ excels all created rocks.

How is Christ like a rock ? 1. *A rock is a high place.* Rocks though they have their root very deep, yet their tops are lifted up above the surface of the earth. Some rocks are higher than the highest buildings. Jesus is an high rock, *High in the dignity of his person ; he that cometh from Heaven is above all, Joh. iii. 31.* The highest Angel is but a mean person to this high rock ; he is adored and worshiped by the highest Angel, *let all the angels of God worship him ;* he was lower than the lowest of men, in the state of humiliation, yet even then was the dignity of his person very high ; *The Son of God the brightness of his Father's person ;* God hath now highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, *Phil. ii. 9.* High in his office, he is the head of principalities and powers, the glorious head of

his body the church. *All power is given to me both in Heaven and earth*, Mat. xxviii. 18. God hath made him the Judge both of the quick and the dead, he is the high possessor of Heaven and Earth, the great commander of men and angels. *High in his gracious qualifications*, he is full of wisdom, grace, holiness, beauty and glory, all divine perfections are in him in the highest degree; whatsoever may any way heighten a person, is to be found in this high rock. 2. *A rock is a place of stability*. Rocks keep their place whatsoever stirs are in the world. Storms and tempests do sometimes overturn houses, but they do not remove the rocks out of place; the firmness of a rock is grown into a proverb. Jesus hath the stability of a rock; we change and remove, but he continues unchangeable, Heb. i. 10. 11. Should Christ prove unstable, the whole church, yea the whole creation would fall. *He is stable in his promises*; they are the sure mercies of David. Christ can no more break his promises, than deny himself; the church hath nothing else for its foundation. 3. *Christ is a rock for strength*, Mountains are high and big, but they have not the strength of rocks. *Be thou my strong rock, whereunto I may continually resort*, Psl. xxxi. 2. *Christ sustaineth all things by the word of his power*, Heb. i. 3. As he did create, so doth he uphold whatsoever he hath created, he is the great Atlas of the world, upon whose shoulders the whole fabric of heaven and earth resteth; and all this he beareth without the least trouble. Every sin committed, doth even overset the great universe, and would tumble all to dust, if Jesus did not by his infinite power keep it up. 4. *Christ is a rock for defence*. Rocks are the strongest fortifications; art can make no places so defensible as rocks, *munitions of rocks*, Isa. xxxiii. 16. Creatures when pursued, if they can but get to a rock, defy all their pursuers. Christ is the best, the only place for safety. *O my Dove thou art on the clefts of the rock*, Cant. ii. 14. those clefts are the wounds of Jesus, where the soul hides itself as the doves do in their nests from danger. When Moses desired to see the glory of God, God tells him, *he would put him in a cleft of the rock while his glory passed by*, Exo. xxxii. 22. This rock some say signifies Christ the true rock, by whom alone we behold the glory of God: in the clefts of this, is the soul defended from the wrath of God; from the rage of sin, and from the fiery darts of Satan. There's no place of safety out of

Jesus ; where it not for the clefts of this rock, the bloody pursuers of the soul would overtake and destroy it ; Christ's defensive virtue was shadowed out excellently by the Cities of refuge ; in this respect *Isaiah* calls him, *the shadow of a great rock in a weary land*, c. xxxii. 2.

II. Christ doth excel all other rocks. 1. *He is a living rock.* *The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock*, 2 Sam. xxii. 47. Christ hath the best life ; a self-depending, an undecaying life, which can be said of no other rock ; he is a living stone, 1 Pet. ii. 4. 2. *Christ is an impassible rock.* Other rocks may be undermined and over-turned, Nah. xv. 6. The rocks as all other mixed bodies, are of a perishing nature ; the waters wear the stones, Job. xiv. 19. but Christ is the rock of ages. 3. *Christ is a feeding rock.* Other rocks are sapless, but Christ is a nourishing rock. The rock in the wilderness was herein a type of Christ, it had oil and honey in it, Deut. xxxii. 13. Jesus is a rock of oil and honey ; all the nourishment which God hath appointed for souls, comes from him. 4. *Christ is a rock that depends upon nothing but himself*, he created and established other rocks, but he is his own foundation. 5. *Christ is a fertile rock.* Other rocks are barren and cause unfruitfulness where they grow ; *The seed that fell amongst rocks perished, because it had no deepness of earth*, Luk. viii. 6, 13. but Christ is fruitful, and makes the soul fruitful where he is ; the more a soul is incorporated into this rock, the more fruitful it is ; *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit*, Joh. xv. 5.

For Information. 1. *The safety of the church.* Christ is the foundation of the church, Eph. ii. 20. and because he is a rock, the church built upon him, cannot be thrown down, Mat. vii. 24, 25. The church is bottomed on Christ, an impregnable rock, therefore it shall continue, Mat. xvi. 18. *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* The Papists build upon the person of *Peter*, not upon the rock of *Peter's* confession ; *Thou art Christ the son of the living God.* Our Saviour doth not say thee *Peter*, but upon *this rock will I build my church.* *Peter's* shoulders are too weak to bear up the church, he could not preserve himself from falling ; how can he preserve the church ? *Peter*, though a holy Apostle, will be no better than a broken reed

to them that build on him; the church that's built upon the doctrine of *Peter* shall stand, but that built on his person, or any other Saint, will perish; were *Peter* now on earth to hear what the Papists attribute to him, he would speak to them, as he did to those, Acts iii. 12, &c. *Peter* is a member of the church, and a member cannot be the foundation. 2. *The madness of all that run upon Christ*; he is a rock of offence, Isa viii. 14. not so actively, but passively; many take offence at him in several respects, and oppose him in his doctrine and person, what danger do such men run? *'Tis an hard thing to kick against the pricks*, Acts ix. 5. 'tis as if a venice glass should dispute against a marble wall, or a little ship should run itself against a rock, the rock would soon split it, but the ship could not hurt the rock; he that runs himself against Christ, either in his doctrine, person, offices, government, ministry, or people, doth as foolishly, as the mariner that should run his ship with all violence against a rock; see the caution, Mat. xxi. 44. *Whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*

For Exhortation. 1. *Bless God for this rock*, it is the only rock of salvation; *Exalted be the rock of my salvation*, 2 Sam. xxii. 47. this endures many storms for our sake, and therefore may be called a rock; the rock is beaten with the waves, and keeps in the sea from overflowing the land. Christ the rock endured the storms of God's wrath for our sakes, which beat upon him, as the billows do upon the rock: 'tis this rock that keeps the sea of God's wrath from overflowing us for our sins; if this were away, God's indignation would soon overflow the world. 2. *Get yourselves into this rock.* *From the ends of the earth, will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I*, Psl. lxi. 2. This rock is higher than you, or all your enemies, or all your fears, or all your temptations. In the clefts of this rock, the soul sees more of the glory of God, than in any other place; *I will put thee into the clefts of this rock, and will cause my glory to pass by* Exod. xxxiii. 22. Here is safety, whatever troubles be in the world, hide yourselves in it, and you shall be safe; *enter into the rock and hide thee for fear of the Lord*, Isa. ii. 10. When judgments are abroad, men go up and down to seek rocks of safety; there's no other rock that can shelter you besides Christ, get into him, keep in him, and you are safe.

3. *When you see a rock think on Christ.* We may have many spiritual meditations from every creature, if we had but spiritual hearts; behold the sea dashing against the rock, thus did God's wrath dash upon Christ: see the height and hugeness of a rock, consider the height of Christ, meditate what a dreadful thing it would be, if such a rock should fall upon your heads, think how dreadful will it be to have Christ fall on us; consider the firmness of rocks, then meditate on the stability of Christ, he is stable in his mercy, goodness, truth, &c. Times and men change, but the rock Christ abides constant for ever; when you see the hunted creatures flee to their rocks, then think, thus must the soul, that would be safe, flee to Christ. 4. *Build all the hopes of your salvation on this rock,* he that builds elsewhere, builds on the sand; when Christ was dead he was buried in a sepulchre hewn out of a rock, Mar. xv. 46. Bury yourselves in this rock, and neither sin nor Satan can annoy you; if the anchor be fastened in a rock it will hold, whatever storms come; he that builds his salvation on his own merits, or duties, or graces, fixes his anchor in the floating waves; but he that builds on Christ, fixes it in a solid rock; if faith be the cable, and hope the anchor, fixed in Christ the rock, the ship will be preserved, what tempestuous weather soever arise; you cannot lay too little stress on self, nor too much on Christ.

II. Doct. *That the rock in the wilderness was a special type of Christ.* Though every rock in a general sense represents Christ, yet that rock was a special type, and therefore called a spiritual rock; we read of two rocks, which gave waters miraculously to the people of *Israel* in their journeyings, the one was in *Rephidim*, Exod. xv. 1, 7. to which our text principally refers; the other Numb. xx. 11. That these were divers rocks, and divers miracles, appears, That in *Exodus* was done in *Rephidim* the 11 station, Numb. xxxiii. 14. the other was *Meribah-Kadesh*, Deut. xxxii, 51. which was the 33 station, Numb. xxxiii. 36. *As the places were divers, so were the times.* That in *Exodus* was done in the first year they went out of *Egypt*, that in *Numbers* in the fortieth year, for in the next station *Aaron* dies, in the fifth month of the fortieth year, Num. xxxiii. 38. *In Exodus*, he taketh only the elders with him, but in *Numbers* the whole congregation. *In Exodus* he is commanded to smite the rock, in *Numbers* he is com-

manded to speak to the rock, and because he smote it twice the Lord was angry with him. *That in Exodus was done by the rod of Moses*, but in *Numbers* by *Aaron's rod* that budded, Num. xx. 9. In opening this doctrine I shall shew

I. Wherein that rock was a type of Christ.

II. How Christ differs from that rock.

I. There is a three-fold similitude. 1. *That rock gave out water for the people of God*, Exo. xvii. 6. *Thou shalt smite th rock and there shall come water out of it.* Christ is a rock that yields streams of water; two streams flow out of this rock, a stream of blood, and of grace, *He that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water; this he spake of the spirit, which they that believe in him should receive*, Joh. viii. 38. When the side of Christ was pierced, *there issued out water and blood*, Joh. xix. 34. There is a great similitude between the water out of the rock, and the grace of Jesus; they are very like in the uses for which they serve; the blood and grace of Christ hath the same effect to the soul, which that water had to the body; that water was useful for cleansing; their vessels, garments and bodies, when defiled, were cleansed with the streams of that rock. The blood and grace of Christ, is useful for spiritual cleansing, 1 Joh. i. 7. his grace communicated by his spirit, cleanseth away the filthiness of sin, *by the washing of water through the word*, Eph. v. 26. and is a *fountain set open for sin and uncleanness*, Zech. xii. 1. *The water was useful to quench thirst.* Christ is very useful to quench spiritual thirst; the streams of his blood are the souls only spiritual drink; *His blood is drink indeed*, Joh. vi. 55. and his grace is called drink, Isa. lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth come to the waters.* The soul shall never have any thing that can quench its spiritual thirst, who doth not make use of the waters of this rock. *That water was useful for refreshing.* By their continual journeyings in the wilderness, they were very much heated and wearied; now the water that came out of this rock did refresh them. Saith *Abraham* to the Angels, *Let a little water be fetched and wash your feet, and rest yourselves*, Gen. xviii. 4. Water is a natural cordial for reviving; the blood and grace of Christ is of a refreshing nature; when the soul is wearied and heated by guilt and fiery temptations, it is refreshed and cooled by the communications of his

blood and grace ; *Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Mat. xi. 28. *That water was for fructification.* By these streams, that waste and howling wilderness brought forth for them and their cattle ; these would have perished in the wilderness for want of grass, if those waters had not issued out and gone along with them. The blood and grace of Jesus are the causes of all spiritual fruitfulness ; those waters that issued out from under the threshold of the sanctuary, made all the places fruitful wherever they came, Ezek. xlvii. 9, 10, 12, they did typify the grace of Christ, see also Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 6, 7. these fattening streams make the wilderness like a fruitful garden. *They are very like in the manner of their communication.* *Those waters flowed out plentifully*, the rock gave out not only buckets, but streams of water, Psl. lxxviii. 20. *Behold he smote the rock that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed*, and Psl. cv. 41. *He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out, they ran in the dry places like a river ;* and the waters that came out of the spiritual rock are given out in abundance. See Ezek. xlvii. 4, 5. they were waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over ; the blood of Christ and the grace of the spirit, are without measure ; *he that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of waters*, Joh. viii. 38. every believer hath a whole river of water. Christ is full of grace, and his impartings of grace to his people are like himself, plentiful. *Those waters flowed out freely.* The Israelites had the benefit of the water, without cost or labor, it followed them without any art of theirs ; the blood and grace of Jesus is freely communicated ; the well is not of our digging, the streams are not of our procuring ; *whosoever will*, Isa. lv. 1. *let him come and take of the water of life freely.* Christ doth not sell, but freely gives his blood or grace, which are much for man's benefit, but none of man's procurement. *Those waters flowed out for their present supply, and future necessity ;* it was not a mercy of a day's continuance, but lasted for a long time ; the rock followed them which way soever they travelled, and the blood and grace of Christ are communicated, not only for a day, or present necessity, but for future supply.

II. *That rock in the wilderness was smitten*, Exo. xvii. 6. *thou shalt smite the rock, and the water shall come out of it.* So was Jesus, he was smitten and wounded with grievous

stripes, Isa. liii. 5. *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.* The gospel speaks much of the dreadful smittings of this rock ; he was smitten in his body, his side pierced, his hands and feet nailed, his head crowned with thorns, his face spit upon, and smitten in his soul likewise, he was deserted, was filled with horror ; the cup of the Lord's fury was put into his hand, and he drank the dregs of it, *my soul is sorrowful unto death.* He endured the very torments of hell in his soul, when he sweat drops of blood ; never any person underwent such smittings as he did ; and he was smitten with the rod of *Moses* too, for the curse of the law of *Moses*, which our sins had deserved, was inflicted on him. *He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*, Gal. iii. 13. God smote him with all his force ; if he had not been smitten for us, we could have had no benefit by him ; for it is by stripes we are healed.

III. *That rock was appointed for this use by God himself.* Exo xvii. 6. *Behold I will stand before thee upon the rock in Horeb, and thou shalt smite the rock.* It would never have entered into the heart of *Moses* to have taken that course, if God himself had not given him command ; the nourishing, cleansing and refreshing of the elect by the blood of Christ, is the invention of God alone. *Israel* wanted water, but neither *Moses* nor the people knew where to be furnished ; God must point out the rock, and the way how to bring water out of it. Man stood in need of a Saviour, but knew not till God revealed it, where to have one ; Christ, is a rock of God's finding out. Salvation is called *the salvation of our God*, Ps. xcvi. 1. *He is the rock of our salvation*, Ps. xcv. 1. a rock prepared and ordered by God himself.

II. How Christ differs from this rock.

I. The water of this rock Christ, differs much from the water that came out of the rock. 1. *That was only for bodily uses.* Truly, as a type of Christ is served for spiritual uses, but it did properly reach no further than the cleansing, cooling and reviving of the outward man ; but the water that issues out of this rock is for spiritual uses, it purges, cools and revives the conscience, Heb. ix. 13, 14. All the legal purifications did only reach to the cleansing of the body, but the blood of Christ extends to

the conscience. 2. *That water was communicated, not only to men, but to beasts*, their flocks and herds drank of it as well as they; but the water of this rock is not communicated to any but the elect, *he that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water*, Joh. viii. 38. The blood and grace of Christ is tendered to all where the gospel is preached, but only believers drink of it. 3. *The water did not so satisfy, but they thirsted again*. So of Jacob's well; *He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again*, Joh. iv. 13. But the water of this rock doth with one draught for ever quench the thirst of the soul, Joh. iv. 14. *He that drinks of this water shall never thirst*. There is a two-fold thirst, a thirst of want, and of spiritual desire; he that drinks of Christ, shall thirst with delight, but never with total indigency. There is a spiritual holy drowsy in the heart of a believer after Christ and grace, as there is an unholy thirst in wicked men after sin; the more he drinks of Christ the more he thirsts after him; the soul is diseased that doth not feel this thirst, but he that hath once drank of this rock, shall never thirst, so as to be without Christ or grace again. 4. *That water did not run without interruption*. Though the text saith, *the rock followed them*, yet not so, but that they were sometimes at a pinch, see Num. xxi. 17, 18. the rock was set abroad in the former, and a well digged in the latter, to relieve their thirst; but the streams which flow out of this rock, run without interruption and for ever, Joh. iv. 14. *The water that I shall give him, shall be a well of water springing up to eternal life*. No drought can dry up, no winter freeze those streams, *He that dwells under the shadow of this rock, his waters shall be sure*, Isa. xxxiii. 16. these waters will run constantly and uninterruptedly till the soul come to heaven. 5. *The water that came out of the rock was not really in it, but was by a miracle brought out of it*. The rock had another foundation besides itself; but the water that flows out of this spiritual rock is properly in the rock; *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. i. 19. 6. *The water that issued out of the rock was liable to corruption*, though without doubt excellent water, because immediately produced by a miracle, and whatsoever God doth immediately, is more excellent than that which is done by means; yet doubtless, it was as all other water is, liable to corruption; but the water that comes out of this rock, is not capable of

any pollution ; both the blood and grace of Christ are undefiled, all that comes from him is pure and without blemish; Rev. xxii. 1. No chrystal is so clear, as those streams which flow from Jesus.

II. The smittings of this rock differ from the smittings of that rock. 1. *That rock was insensible of its smittings*, being inanimate it could not feel the weight of the rod, but Jesus was very sensible of his smittings; *My soul is sorrowful even unto death*, Mat. xxvi. 38. Sufferings are no sufferings if not felt. 2. *That rock was smitten by the arm of a man*. Moses held the rod and smote the rock ; but this rock was smitten with the arm of the mighty God. All the smittings of the Jews were nothing, it was the rod of God that made the impression ; *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief*, Isa. liii. 10. Had all the creatures on earth smitten Christ with their rods, and God had forborn smiting, he would never have complained. 3. *There was no wrath in God against the rock, when he commanded Moses to smite it*. He was wrath against the people for their murmuring, but not with the rock ; but in the smittings of this rock there was wrath. God did not hate his beloved son, yet was his wrath poured out upon him ; that wrath which we had deserved ; Christ endured, else we must endure it ourselves.

For Information. 1. *The Jews had the same Christ with us*, Heb. xiii. 8. ever since the promise, Gen. iii. 15. *That the seed of the woman should break the Serpent's head* ; the doctrine of Christ was preserved in the church. *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad*, Joh. viii. 56. not only did Abraham expect Christ, but his seed also that kept the religion of God ; all their sacrifices, sacraments and worship ; their tabernacle, temple, high-priest, and whole ministry was typical of that Christ, we now believe in ; the *Manna* they fed upon, the water of the rock they drank of, did preach Christ to them. All the difference between them and us, is they believed in Christ as future, we as crucified actually for us ; they had Christ in types, we as evidently set forth in the gospel, Heb. iv. 2. *That unto them was the gospel preached*. We have the same Christ shewing himself in full proportion, but they had Christ in dark riddles. 2. *All Christ suffered, was by appointment and counsel*, Acts iv. 28. he did not undergo one stripe more than God had determined ; this is clear from this

type; the rock was smitten according to divine appointment, Exo. xvii. 6. He will not leave his people to the will of men, to be used as they please; and if not them, it cannot be thought he should so leave his Son, *The cup which my Father hath given me*, Joh. xviii. 11. and though the executioners had no respect to the divine decree, yet Christ had, and that was one reason why he suffered so willingly.

3. *The sufferings of Christ were not for himself, but for people.* Isa. liii. 8. *For the transgression of my people was he stricken*; there was no transgression in himself, he was a lamb without spot, and blemish; it was for our sins that he was wounded; this is clearly seen in the smiting of the rock; the rock did not offend, but *Israel* did; the sweat, piercings, sufferings, scourgings, and bloodsheds of Jesus, were not for any offence of his own, but for our offences, for our sakes he subjected himself to the law commanding, and the law condemning, *For their sakes I sanctify myself*, Joh. xvii. 19. 'Tis spoken of the sanctification of himself by sufferings; sin had made a breach between God and us, and Christ was smitten to make up that breach.

4. *What a miserable condition the world was in before Christ was promised.* Man was quite undone for ever, had not Christ been smitten; when the rock was smitten the Israelites were happy, but before they were in a languishing condition; in a barren wilderness where no water was, Exo. xvii. 1, 3. they must have soon perished if supply had not come, Hos. xiii. 5. *I knew thee in the wilderness, in a land of great drought.* Man had been more miserable, if Christ had not been promised, their souls had been burnt up with thirst, if this rock had not given them water. 'Tis said in Ezek. xlvii. 9. *That every thing that moveth whither these waters come shall live.* Therefore there can be nothing but death in every place whither these waters do not come. All persons, to whom the streams of this rock do not flow, must be in a perishing state.

5. *The wonderfulness of the world's salvation by Christ.* The Apostle calls godliness a great mystery, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Salvation by Christ, is no less than miraculous; 'tis the giving of water out of a rock. It was beyond the thoughts of *Moses*, that the dry rock should be turned into a fountain; and had Angels and men sat in counsel how lost man might be restored, they would never have dreamed of the incarnation of the son of God: who could

have expected a root out of a dry ground ? or have looked for streams of water out of a dry rock ? 6. *The great patience of Christ to his people ; the spiritual rock followed them.* Though Israel murmured and were unthankful, yet the rock continued running ; though Christ sees all our murmurings, and unthankfulness, yet he keeps the streams running ; should every sin we commit dry up the floods of grace, how soon should we want supply of water, but Christ is so patient, so merciful, that though he see his blood and grace despised, yet he causes both the one and the other to follow the soul. 7. *That the sacraments truly exhibited that which they signified.* The rock is called Christ, because it did in a spiritual sense truly exhibit him ; in the same sense is the bread and wine in the supper called the body and blood of Christ, not for change of substance, but because they in a spiritual sense exhibit Christ crucified to the believing receiver, and because of the sacramental union between the sign and the thing signified : such expressions are common in scripture, circumcision is called *the covenant of God*, because a sign of the covenant, Gen. xvii. 10, 14. The Paschal lamb, *the Lord's passover*, Exo. xii. 11. because a sign of God's passing over the doors of the *Israelites* when he smote the *Egyptians*. It's a judiciary hand of God upon the Papists, that they cannot understand such passages without the irrational opinion of transubstantiation. 8. *That all supply is from Christ.* All the water in the wilderness was out of the rock ; when *Israel* wanted water to drink, or for cleansing, they went to the rock for supply. Christ is the storehouse of the church in every exigence, Rev. xxii. 1. *A pure river of water, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the lamb ;* Christ is the fountain-head of all the streams of grace, for the refreshing of the church, Psl. lxxxvii. 7. *All my springs are in thee.* The ordinances are the pipes which convey the streams to the soul, but the spring-head is Christ the rock.

For Exhortation. From the water learn, 1. *To rejoice as much in the streams which flow from Christ, as Israel did in those which flowed from the rock.* No doubt there was great joy amongst the thirsty multitude, when they saw the water gush out of the rock, their murmurings were turned into rejoicings, see Num. xxi. 16, 17. Some expositors make the well at *Beer* a type of Christ, as the rock was ; he is

called a rock, and a well, Cant. iv. 15. It becomes God's people to sit about this well, and to sing praises; *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation*, Isa. xii. 3. 2. *Use the streams which flow from Christ, as Israel did the streams of the rock.* When they were athirst they drank of it, when unclean, they washed in it, when heated, they cooled themselves with it; they did not look upon, but made use of the water, so must we the blood and grace of Jesus. The ordinances are the channels where these streams run; faith is the bucket by which they are drawn; 'tis our duty to make use of them, they purge away our filthiness, quench the thirst, abate unnatural heats, and help against barrenness. Take three motives to use this water; *Christ invites men to it*, Isa. lv. 1. *Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters.* One great end, why the ministry was appointed, was, that the thirsty soul might be invited to come. Ministers are the public officers whom Christ hath authorized, to call the weary passenger to drink. The rock in the wilderness did invite the people to drink; their own necessity was invitation enough, but this rock calls the soul that needs him, to make use of him. *Not to use the streams that flow from Christ is to slight the greatest love God ever manifested to men.* Infinite wisdom could not devise a more excellent way, infinite bounty could not provide a more costly way, to satisfy the thirsty soul, than by setting this rock Christ abroad: not to use him, is to say either that you do not want him, or that he is not suitable for your wants. *It's very dangerous not to make use of these streams.* There's no other water of God's appointment, either for cleansing, cooling, or quenching the thirst; these are not only the purest, but the only streams fit for the uses of the soul; if you neglect these there will a stream of wrath come forth, for your destruction; use them constantly and after a right manner, and you will find them as profitable as the water of the rock was to the people of God.

II. From the smiting of the rock, which typified the smittings of Christ, learn 1. *To acknowledge the severe justice of God against sin.* There are many glasses in scripture of this the drowning of the world, the burning of Sodom, the rejection of the Jews, the casting down the evil angels to hell; but nothing sets it out so clearly as the smiting of this rock; that the Son of his love should be smitten after such a dreadful manner,

shews his severe justice, his perfect hatred of sin. Though Christ prayed and intreated, yet would not the justice of God abate one stripe. You that question the justice of God or his hatred of sin, go to the rock in *Horeb*, or rather to mount *Calvary*, and see how Christ was smitten of God when he was made a sacrifice for sin. 2. *Acknowledge sins vileness.* 'Tis a filthy thing; nothing in the world could expiate it, but the smitings of Christ; should all the angels of God have been smitten to death, they could never have made satisfaction for one sin. Sin cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ. 3. *Acknowledge Christ's unspeakable kindness in being content to be smitten for our sakes,* it was his voluntary act, the Father could not have smitten him without his own consent; yea, he was joyful to be smitten; *I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished,* Luk. xxii. 50. and what makes it more admirable, is that he was smitten for murmurers, who would slight both his person and his smitings. 4. *Be contented to be smitten for him who was smitten for you.* Though ye be smitten by the tongue, by reproaches, or the hand by buffetings, bear it patiently, if for the truth, worship, or name of Christ; you cannot be smitten for him as he was for you; you are smitten with rods, he with scorpions; you drank up the wrath of men, he drank up the wrath of the Almighty.

For Consolation. 1. That Christ was a smitten rock, hath three grounds of comfort. *That divine justice is fully satisfied.* It's a cause of grief to the Saints to consider the severity of divine justice, and their own inability to make satisfaction; the wrath of God is a consuming fire, who shall be able either to endure or quench this fire; Christ hath endured it, and thereby quenched it. When you read of his smitings, you cannot doubt but justice is satisfied; considering the dignity of his person, justice is better satisfied with one blow on him, than if you should have been smitten to all eternity: Isa. liii. 4, 5. speaks of Christ's sufferings, and v. 10, 11, 12. of the satisfaction of those smitings to expiate sin. He that believes Christ was smitten, cannot but believe that justice is satisfied by those smitings. *That Christ will make good to your souls all that he hath purchased by his smitings.* When the soul reads of the great privileges of adoption, salvation, remission, &c. partly by reason of the greatness of these things, and partly because of his own

deserve it, he doubts whether ever he shall enjoy them or no ; here's enough to establish faith and to rectify the judgment as to this particular, Christ was smitten with the rod of God that every believer might enjoy all this. God is not unjust to smite Christ upon a covenant made between them, and not to perform what he promised ; nor is Christ so unwise, as to endure such smittings in vain, see Isa. liii. 10, &c. and the rather may we build on this, because Christ is now at God's right hand, that by his continual intercession he may apply all he purchased by his cruel smittings for the elect. *That Christ will deny his people nothing really good for them.* He hath engaged to bestow upon them *whatever they ask in his name*, Joh. xiv. 3, We need not doubt, that he who had love enough to bear so many heavy blows for us, will not want love to bestow lesser gifts upon us. Rom. viii. 32. *He that spared not his own Son but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* The argument is as strong of Christ ; he that was so willing to be smitten for us, will not be unwilling to do for us whatever we want. 2. That the rock smitten gave out water ; this hath a three-fold ground of comfort. *It's a comfort against the barrenness of thy heart.* It's cause of much trouble to believers, to see how barren their hearts are, they are like the barren heath, or wilderness, bring forth little or nothing, except briars and thorns ; well, the water that comes out of this rock, can make the wilderness a fruitful valley, Isa. xxxv. 1, 7. and the unfruitful heart fruitful. *It's a comfort against all the filthiness of the soul.* Believers are ready to despair, when they consider how filthiness grows upon them ; they gather dirt every day, their spots grow deeper and broader ; here is comfort, the water of the rock is cleansing ; and is continually running. New washings will help against new defilings. As often as thou defilest thy feet go to the running water and thou shalt be cleansed. *It's a ground of comfort against all thy unworthiness.* When people of God consider how their carriage is and hath been to Christ against them they cannot think of any thing but wrath against them. Remember that rock gave out its streams to murmurers, and it followed them too ; their sin did not dry up the streams. Though we be unworthy, yet Christ will not cease to be faithful.

SERMON XXXVI. ISA 49.—2 ^{bonds,} ^{ment} ^{al}

“He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword, he hath made me a polished shaft,”

ISAIAH having comforted the church by promises of deliverance from *Babylon*; in this and the following chapters comforts it with promise of restoration by Christ, of which all outward deliverances were but types. To present these comforts with more life, he speaks of God's designation of Christ to the Mediatorship, v. 1, 2. The furnishing of Christ for his work is in v. 2. together with God's protecting of him. Christ's fitness is set out metaphorically, First, by a *sword*, Second, by a *shaft*. God's protecting of him, is expressed by way of resemblance also, *In the hollow of his hand hath he hid me, in his quiver hath he hid me.* I now speak of Christ's fitness.

I. The thing spoken of. The mouth of Christ.

II. The matter spoken of that thing; it is made like a *sharp sword*, and like a *polished shaft*.

I. That the mouth of Christ is like a *sharp sword*. Christ's mouth means the doctrine of his mouth, see Gen. xlv. 21, Lev. xxiv. 12. Num. iii. 16. and Cant. v. 16. *His mouth is most sweet*; that is, the doctrine of his mouth. Christ here speaks of himself as the great preacher of the church, and therefore says, his mouth was made like a sharp sword. It's said, Rev. i. 16. *That out of his mouth went a two-edged sword*, and c. xix. 1. *Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword*. The word of God in the mouths of ministers, is a *two-edged sword*, Heb. iv. 12. much more is it so, when in the mouth of Christ. Two things I shall open.

I. The resemblance between Christ's mouth and a sword.

II. How this sword differs from other swords.

I. The resemblance between Christ's mouth and a sword.

1. *A sword is a killing instrument*; by this doth the soldier destroy the assaulting enemy. To put men to the sword, is equivalent to killing. *David* by the sword cut off the head of *Goliath*, 1 Sam. xviii. 51. The mouth of Christ hath a killing power; hereby he kills sin in the hearts of his people; by this is the head of pride cut off, and the heart-blood of unbelief let out, and all those lusts which fight against the soul, are put to death. *I have hewed them*

by my Prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth, Hos. vi. 5. All the spiritual slaughters of sin made by Jesus, are done by the two-edged sword that goes out of his mouth. There is a two-fold killing of men with the sword of Christ's mouth; a killing of sin in them, this makes the soul alive; and a killing of them for sin; in the elect, it kills sin, to the wicked it becomes a soul-destroying sword, because they will not have their sins killed by it. 3. *A sword is a conquering instrument,* by it did Alexander conquer the world, and many kingdoms have been brought under the command of mean men, by the terror of the sword. Few nations but have had experience of its conquering power. The sword of Christ's mouth is, and hath been a conquering weapon. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Sion, rule thou in the midst of thine enemies,* Psl. cx. 2. it refers to Christ, and to his conquest over the world; the scepter of his strength is nothing else but the sword of his mouth: by the power of this, Jesus subdued both persons and nations to the obedience of himself, 2 Cor, x. 4. When Christ came to conquer the world, he did not use the material sword, as the great conquerors of the world do, but this sword of his mouth, and by its power, hath already brought into obedience many populous nations, and will go on till all be brought into subjection, see Rev. vi. 2. The white horse is the glorious gospel of Christ, called white for its purity and brightness. The rider is Jesus, the author and publisher of the gospel. All the glorious achievements of Christ, as a conqueror, are done by the power of this gospel, see Psl. xlv. 3, 4, 5. When this sword doth effectually come to the conscience of a sinner, he presently yields up himself, and becomes a homager to Jesus. This sword doth accomplish the victory over the conscience, First, it convinces the conscience that the devil, the world, and sin, which have ever exercised regal power over it before, have no right to rule. Second, In that it discovers to the soul, Christ's right to exercise dominion; hereby he knows that *the government is laid upon his shoulders,* and that God hath ordained, that every knee should bow, and every tongue should confess his name. Third, in that it acquaints the soul with the easiness, righteousness and profitableness of Christ's dominion. The soul is made to believe, that the devil's rule is sweet and profitable, and the rule of Christ harsh, cruel and disadvantageous, and there

fore it stands out against Christ ; *Let us break their bonds, and cast away their cords from us*, Psl. ii. 3. The government of Christ is misrepresented, as if it were the most tyrannical in the world ; but when the sword of Christ's mouth comes to the conscience, it shews Christ to be the best of Kings for justice, wisdom, meekness and mercifulness ; and his laws the best for purity, profit, peaceableness, and all kind of advantages, and the soul seeing all this yields up itself to Christ, and throws off all other dominions. 3. *A sword is a defensive instrument*, as it's offensive to the enemy, so it's defensive to him that hath it, if he manage it aright. The sword of Christ's mouth is excellent for defence, to such as know how to use it, Prov. vi. 22. *When thou goest it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest it shall keep thee*, (1.) *In case of sin*. By this sword is the soul preserved from falling into sin, Psl. xvii. 4. While *David* kept this sword girded about him, sin was not able to overcome him. This shews the evil consequences of sin, works in the soul hatred of sin, to give the soul power against sin, and so defends it from sin. (2.) *In case of temptation*. One piece of the spiritual armour, is the *sword of the spirit*, Eph. vi. 17. this is the sword of Christ's mouth, and is of singular use to preserve tempted souls from being overcome. The devil hath special times of temptation, and very many baits to ensnare the soul in all those times ; the best defence that a christian can use, is the sword of Christ's mouth ; by this did our Saviour defend himself, Mat. iv. 4, 7, 10. Three times doth satan assault him, and three times doth he draw the sword of his mouth, and thereby beats back those temptations, and so christians may preserve themselves, for the word of Christ is able to put some argument into the mouth against every temptation which satan can use ; if to pride, this shews us its danger ; if to distrust, this relieves us with the thoughts of God's all-sufficiency ; if to despair, this arms us by the consideration of Christ's satisfaction, and God's readiness to forgive sin, it will furnish the soul with some cover or other, to defend it from all kinds of temptation.

II. This sword differs from others ten ways. 1. *It reacheth not only to the outward but to the inward man*. Other swords have their effects only upon the body, but this can wound and convince the conscience, Heb. iv. 12. *It pierceth even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow*. Other swords can divide between the

joints of the harness, but this between the joints and the marrow, it *pricked those three thousand at the very heart*, Acts ii. 37. 2. *There's no defence against this sword.* There's no material sword so sharp, but strong armour will keep it from entering, but no armour can keep this sword from entering; the heart that is as hard as steel, feels its point, when Christ sets it on with power. Smite a rock with the strongest sword, and it makes no impression, it may break itself; but this sword is so sharp that it can cut into the hardest rock; what is said of the *Behemoth*, and the *Leviathan*, may of the unconverted hearts of men, see Job xl. 18, 19. and xli. 24. and yet, when this sword approaches, they are pierced as easily, as if they were flesh. 3. *It is a healing as well as wounding sword.* The material sword hath a killing, but no enlivening power; we have heard of many slain, but never of any made alive by the sword; but the sword of Christ's mouth hath an enlivening power, it's every way as good for healing, as for wounding; when it hath broken and humbled a sinner, there's nothing but this can comfort such a sinner; you read as much of the comforting and quickening power of Christ, as of his humbling power, Hos. vi. 1. *He hath smitten, and he will heal.* There hath been much talk of sword-salve, that if the sword be plastered, the wound will be healed. I know no reason for such efficacy, but we may say of Christ's mouth, as it's a sword to cut, so it's salve to heal. Christ's lips are compared to lilies, *dropping sweet-smelling myrrh*, Cant. v. 13. This sword as it causes faintings, so it gives cordials against them. 4. *It never faileth of the effect intended.* The material sword often comes short of it's designed effect, but this always does what Christ means to do, Isa. lv. 10, 11. *My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it;* what is said of the sword of *Saul*, 2 Sam. i. 22. *That it never returned empty*, is much more true of this; when he means to convince, the soul is convinced; to convert, the soul is converted, or to comfort, the soul is comforted; whatsoever commission is given to this sword it doth effectually put it in execution. 5. *It can do execution on many at once.* Other swords can deal but with one at once; the same sword may slay many successively, but not at the same moment; but this can make impression upon multitudes at the same instant. As he spake these words, *many*

believed in him, Joh. viii. 30. It can convince and subdue souls in this place, and in places far distant; it can as easily pierce a thousand as one man. 6. *It is never the worse for using*, it contracts no rust, it never looseth its edge. Other swords decay, and grow dull and weak by much service, but this never decays; 'tis as bright and as sharp now, as the first day it was used. Christ hath fought many battles and obtained many victories by this sword, and yet it is still as fit for execution as ever, Isa. xl. 8. 7. *There's no flying away from this sword*. Though the material sword, be often exact, yet may a man hide himself from it; indeed when God draws out a sword, and gives it a charge to smite such a person, he shall never be able to flee from it; but there is otherwise a possibility of hiding from the sword; when an enemy comes with thousands of drawn swords into a city, many flee or hide themselves, and escape; but there's neither flying away, nor hiding from this sword, it will follow a man from one nation to another, and will find him, though hid in the caves of the earth, Heb. iv. 12, 13. *It's quick and powerful, a discerners of the thoughts, and intents of the heart*. Man may sooner fly away, or hide himself from himself, than from the word of Christ. 8. *It is all edge*. Other swords, though they have an edge, yet they do not cut on every side, they have a flat as well as a sharp part, but this cuts on every side, it hath *two edges*, Rev. ii. 12. every part hath an aptitude to cut; his precepts have a sharpness in them to direct, inform, and command the conscience; his promises to revive, to comfort, to raise up; his threatenings to affright, terrify, cast down, and wound the guilty. 9. *It hath no dross in it*. All others have a mixture of dross in them; the purest metal is not without some course mixture, but this is all pure metal, *All the words of my mouth are in righteousness, there is nothing froward nor preverse in them*, Prov. viii. 8. The precepts, promises, and threatenings of Christ's mouth, are all pure and perfect, as himself; those who judge of any impurity in the word of Christ do it because their hearts are impure; a pure heart sees nothing but purity in Christ's word, *Every word of God is pure*, Prov. xxx. 5. 10. *It is of God's own immediate framing*, others are the workmanship of men. God created the materials, but the framing of such a weapon is the work of man's hand, but the sword of Christ is of God's own framing. *He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword*.

SERMON XXXVI. ISA. 49--2.

“He hath made me a polished shaft.”

PROCEED to the second metaphor. *That the mouth of Christ is like a polished shaft.* A shaft or arrow is one of those military instruments used to wound the enemy; though now disused, yet it was formerly an instrument of much esteem; as great victories were obtained by the bow and shaft, as by the sword. The old Latin and Greek, read it *a choice or chief shaft*, as Cant. v. 10. Others read it *a bright shaft*, which our translators have well rendered a polished shaft; we find the word of Christ’s mouth compared to the shaft, Psl. xlv. 5. *Thine arrows are sharp at the heart of the King’s enemies.* That called the sword upon the thigh, v. 3. is here called the arrow, and Rev. vi. 2. Christ is said to have a bow in his hand, and gets the victory by the bow, as well as by the sword. Three things I shall open.

I. Why Christ’s word is compared to a shaft.

II. Why to a polished shaft:

III. How much it differs from other shafts.

I. Why Christ’s word is compared to a shaft. I shall not mention those resemblances I spake of in the former metaphor, though all those agree to the shaft as well as the sword, but I shall add four resemblances, which more properly agree to the shaft, than to the sword, as 1. *The shaft doth execution at a farther distance than the sword.* The archer can wound, when the sword-man cannot reach. The sword cuts near at hand, but the shaft can pierce at a great distance; when the enemy is fled from reach of sword, the shaft can follow him; and the word of Christ can kill not only near, but afar off. Though men be far off in place, and in state, yet they are not out of the command of the polished shaft. 2. *The arrow comes with greater force than the sword.* The impression of the hand of the archer, and the motion of the air, brings the arrow with a very strong force, that it fastens deeper into the body than the sword; the sword is better for cutting, but the arrow for piercing; and the word of Christ not only cuts the flesh, but pierceth like the shaft into the very bowels of the soul. 3. *The shaft is not so discernable as the sword.* The sword

is easily seen, but the arrow is hardly perceived, the shaft comes so silently and swiftly, that it's often lodged in the heart before it is perceived: the word of Christ wounds undiscernably, the heart is pierced often before it is aware; the arrow was in the heart of *Paul*, before he knew it.

4. *The arrow can enter in at a lesser compass than the sword.* The shaft can screw itself in at the least hole; *Ahab* was slain by an arrow, that went in through the joints of his harness, Kings i. 22, 24. The word of Christ can enter in at the least passage, it's compared to light, Psl. cxix. 105. and if it cannot find a passage, it will make one.

II. Why it's called a polished shaft. 1: *To shew its fitness for the work designed.* A shaft untrimmed is unfit for service; when God called his archers against *Babylon*, he commanded them to *gather the shields, and make bright the arrows*, Jer. li. 11. The mouth of Christ is always fit for execution, and therefore called a polished arrow. 2. *To shew the constancy of its using.* Things that are often used are bright and shining. Christ doth not keep this arrow in the quiver, but makes daily use of it some way or other. 'Tis the mind of Christ that the ministers of the gospel into whose hands he hath committed this arrow, should make constant use of it upon all occasions, 2 Tim. iv. 2. If they should not, Christ himself will; the arrows of his mouth are always flying abroad, and that keeps them bright and polished. 3. *To shew its glory.* Things that polished make a glorious shew; and the word of Christ, especially when it comes out of his lips, is full of glory, it's called the *glorious gospel of the blessed God*, 1 Tim. i. 11. It's glorious in the great privileges which it contains, and in the rich promises it publishes to the world. The best refined gold, the most glittering silver, is but dark, if compared with the word of glory.

III: How this shaft differs from others. 1. *In the swiftness of its motion.* The motion of an arrow from a bow is very swift, yet it must have some distance of time to fly from the hand to the mark, but the word of Christ, is in an instant in the heart of him at whom it's levelled, Psl. cxlvii. 15. *His word runneth very swiftly*, see also Christ's word to the leprous man, *Be thou clean, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed*, Mat. viii. 3. and to the blind man, *Go thy way*,

thy faith hath made the whole, and immediately he received his sight, Mar. x. 52. No arrow makes so immediate impression in the mark as this; no sooner doth Christ say to the soul, be lightened, be quickened, be comforted, but the work is done. 2. *In the certainty of its execution.* Other shafts are liable to miscarriages, they sometimes break by the way, or fall short or wide of the mark; no archer so exact, but doth often miss the mark, but this arrow never misseth the mark, wheresoever Christ intends it should light, there it doth; when he sent forth this shaft to *Zaccheus*, he stuck it so fast in his conscience, that he presently came down and received him into his house; when he darted this arrow into the heart of the jailor, he could not but yield; when he shot into the conscience of *Saul*, he dismounted him presently, and forces him to cry, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* Whatsoever stands in the way, this will pierce through it, to fulfil the will of him that sent it; neither man nor devil can hinder the execution of this shaft. The uses are these. 1. *It's very dangerous for any person to oppose Christ.* Proud man is so head-strong, that he dares contend against Christ himself; offers him affronts every day; wars against him by the open violation of his commands, and reviles him, as if he would pull him out of his throne. Better it is to fight against all creatures, than with Christ; *It is a hard thing to kick against the pricks*, Acts ix. 5. Christ neither wants strength nor weapons to bring down all that oppose him; his very mouth is a sharp sword, a polished shaft. *David* speaking of his enemies, saith, *their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword*, Psl. lvii. 4. Christ's mouth is full of spears and arrows. It's said of the two witnesses, that if any one will hurt them, *Fire goeth out of their mouth, and devours them*, Rev. xi. 5. Christ hath both fire and sword in his own mouth; it's present and eternal death to oppose him. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of Iron, and dash them in pieces like a Potter's vessel*, Psl. ii. 9. One angry word of Christ will ruin all his opposers. 2. *That Christ is able by his own power to defend his people against the strength and rage of all their enemies.* The enemies of the church are many, and usually have all weapons of war, to do the church mischief. The church is often weak and disarmed; unable either to defend themselves, or offend their enemies. When the *Philistines* made war against the *Israelites*, there was nei-

ther sword nor spear found in the hands of the people, save in the hands of Saul and Jonathan. The Philistines had removed all the smiths out of the land. 1 Sam. xiii, 19, 22. yet they were preserved, and their enemies subdued, c. xiv. How weak soever the church be, Christ is furnished with weapons, he hath both sword and shaft; he hath a magazine in himself, his own arm, yea his own lips are weapons, both offensive, and defensive: whilst the mouth of Christ is a sword and shaft, he will be sufficiently able to protect his church, how low soever it be. 3. *This shews what the best ammunition is.* Christians are soldiers, exposed to many assaults both from devils, men, and sins. *We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places,* Eph. vi. 12. He who finds no assaults, may doubt whether he be not still a bond-slave. Against all attempts of Satan, nothing is better than the word of Christ, which is both a sword and an arrow, and to be used accordingly, Eph. vi. 17. this sword helps the christian, how to get, and to use, all the christian armour; *For the girdle of truth,* see Psl. xviii. 22. *I was upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity, how? All his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me. For the breast plate of righteousness,* if it respects the righteousness of our persons, see Rom, i. 17. If the righteousness of our conversation, see Psl. cxix. 9. *For the shoes of the preparation of the gospel,* which signify resolvedness in professing the gospel, notwithstanding all difficulties; the word of Christ is the whetstone of spiritual valour. *For the shield of faith;* the word is both the seed which breeds it, and the breast which gives it suck, and therefore called the word of faith. *For the helmet of hope,* the word strengthens it. Hope is an anchor, the word is the cable to hold it. *For prayer and supplication;* by the word we know what to pray for, and how to pray, so as to obtain. 4. *This gives men the lively picture of a convincing preacher;* he must be one whose mouth is like a sharp sword, and a polished shaft; Jesus was a convincing preacher, *He taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes,* Mat. vii. 27. he made the hearers tremble; he could give the spirit with the word; could command the heart and conscience, being Lord and Judge of both, which no minister can do; yet ministers may learn from Christ what they should be; their mouths must not be leaden daggers, but sharp swords

and polished arrows, Isa. lviii. 1. *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet.* Their mouths must be a flame of fire; they must not be daubers nor flatterers, but so preach, that the heart may be wounded. A minister must be a defenced city, a brazen wall, an iron pillar, a polished arrow, and a sharp sword when he preaches to men. He must have convincing arguments, sharp motives, powerful persuasions, that the hearts of the hearers may be affected; he must preach with life, zeal, and affection, or else dead hearts will get no benefit. You must expect plain and home dealing from faithful ministers. 5. *This shews that Christ is able to do by his word whatsoever he hath promised.* The Saints are afraid, lest their hearts should be too hard for the word; how can that conquer such *Anakims* as are in their hearts? and comfort hearts so dead, so dejected, and get into a conscience so feared? These are their fears; understand but what the word of Christ is, and you cannot doubt its efficacy; it's a sharp sword, and a polished shaft, it will make impression into the hardest matter, it will pierce to the very soul, Heb. iv. 13. it's a hammer that will break the rock in pieces, Jer. xxiii. 29. and we may be more confident, because it is the hand of the spirit. The great doubt of the soul is, if Christ spoke personally then I should hope for success; his mouth indeed was a sharp sword or a polished shaft, but are the mouths of men so? their words are but weak, they have no edge, they may pierce the skin, but not the conscience. Know for your comfort, that Christ speaks as truly by his ministers, as by his own mouth; *He that heareth you, heareth me; the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*, 2 Cor. x. 4. The ministers that succeeded Christ, brought in more by conversion, than Christ personally did; the same spirit in Christ's ministry was in theirs, Rev. ii. 7. *His mouth is on theirs, and his hands on their heads.* Though thy sins be strong, this sword can bring them down, or thy heart be hard, this shaft can pierce it; the word can drop grace, life, and comfort, into the very conscience. Wait on Christ, and you shall feel its efficacy.

SERMON XXXVII. HAG. 2---7.

"Jesus Christ the desire of all nations."

THE Prophet spent most part of c. 1. in contending with

the Jews for their negligence in building the temple ; they had been careful to build and beautify their own houses, but God's house, which should have been first erected, yet lay waste ; they pretended the time was not yet come, and therefore laid aside all thoughts of it ; the Prophet so convinces them by his rebukes, that at last *Zerubbabel* the Governor, *Joshua* the High-Priest, and all the people did gird themselves to the work, v. 12 to 15. In this *Chap.* the Prophet endeavours to strengthen their hands in the work, by making many gracious promises, as 1. Of God's assisting presence, v. 4. 2. Of the confirmation of the covenant God had made with their fathers, at their coming out of *Egypt*, v. 5. 3. Of the great glory of this house, v. 9. and in this promise he removes a scruple. The Prophets that prophesied of the building of this temple, had mentioned that it should not only equalize, but exceed the former temple ; this they doubted, v. 3. those that had seen the old temple, judged this they were now erecting but mean in respect of that, yea, as nothing ; the Prophet adds that promise, v. 9. that God would make good what his servants had said, that the glory of this latter house, should exceed the glory of the former. One reason of which the text gives, there should be a presence in this latter temple, as never was in the former, *The desire of all nations shall come to it, and fill it with glory.* The text is diversely interpreted ; some understand the elect of all nations. *Calvin* goes this way, only he adds this, that the nations shall come and bring with them whatever is precious, to consecrate it to the worship of God. The *Hebrews* by *desire* understand whatsoever is precious and desirable, as riches, honors, &c. so that they say it means, the elect of all nations shall come and bring with them all their desirable things, to dedicate them to the service of God. *Drusius* follows this exposition ; they shall come with the desire of all nations, that is, with such things as are most desirable. The *Septuagint* reads it, the choice things of all nations shall come. This exposition bath nothing in it contrary to the analogy of faith, for it is most certain. 1. *That the elect of all nations, are the choice and desirable ones of all nations ;* they are called the *excellent ones*, Psl. xvi. 3. they are the gold, others the dross ; they are the flowers, others the weeds ; they the wheat, others the tares, the chaff ; they the glory, the crown, the honour of all nations, the portion of God, his jewels, his precious

stones. One of God's called ones, is worth all wicked men. 2. *That these desirable ones, consecrate their most precious enjoyments to the service of God.* When they come to the temple, they bring thither all their pleasant things. Exo. x. 26. *Our cattle shall go with us, there shall not an hoof be left behind, for therefore must we take to serve the Lord our God.* When any person is brought over effectually to God, the best possession he hath, is not thought too precious for the service of God; when the *Magi* turned worshippers of Christ, they brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Heart religion will presently command the whole man and all that he hath. As Christ hath promised to *add all other things to those that seek his kingdom, and the righteousness thereof*, Mat. xi. end. When the heart is once engaged to God, all other things are presently added. Others expound it of Christ, making the text a prophecy of his incarnation, and entrance into this temple, and so conclude against the Jews, that Christ the Son of *Mary* is the promised *Messiah*, for he was by this prophecy to come while the second temple was standing, and no doubt for this cause, was the second temple more glorious than the first, because it was honored with the bodily presence of Christ. In this sense I shall speak of the text, as a prophecy of Christ, who is here called the desire of all nations, yea, the earnest desire, for the Hebrew signifies a burning desire. The text affords a double observation.

I. That Christ is the desire of all nations.

II. That the church in all ages was instructed in the doctrine of the manifestation of Christ.

I. *That Christ is the desire of all nations*, Cant. v. 16. *he is altogether lovely, he is altogether desires, or all of him is desires*, he is the desire of his Father. *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*; of the Angels, those heavenly principalities adore and admire him; of the Patriarchs, they did by faith expect, and wait for him, and he is here called, *the desire of all nations*, Gen. xlix. 10. where the aged Patriarch prophesying of Christ, hath these words: *unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* By nations we are to understand the Gentiles, as contra distinguished from the Jews; they are usually called *Heathen Gentiles, Nations, Greeks*; expressions whereby all other people were

distinguished from the Jews, who were then the only people of God. Christ was not only the desire of the Jews, but of the Gentiles also. By the particle; *All*, we are not to understand every individual person of all nations, for the greatest part deride, and reject Christ; but *all* nations is put for some of all, a gleanings of all nations. It's said that Christ *shall sprinkle nations with his blood*, Isa. lii. 15. yea the word *all*, signifies 'many of all, see Rev. vii. 9. *A great multitude of all nations*. The meaning is, that Christ is the desire of the Gentiles, as well as the Jews.

How is Christ said to be the desire of all nations ?

1. Because he was desired for the nations. Noah prayed for God to *enlarge Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem*, Gen. ix. 27. and the Jewish church continually desired that Christ might be manifested to the nations, Psl. lxvii. 2, 4. *Let thy saving health be known among the nations; Let the nations rejoice and be glad, for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon the earth*. Though many of them were scandalized when they saw the Gentiles converted, yet did they generally pray for their conversion; the great request of the Jews was, that the Gentiles might know and embrace Christ. *He was prepared for all nations*. This is *Gualther's* note upon the text. Though the Gentiles did not look for Christ, yet because God had in Christ prepared salvation for them, therefore is Christ called, the desire of the nations. The scripture tells us, that Christ was in the intention of God given to redeem the nations, as well as the Jews; though he came of the Jews, and was first tendered to them, yet did God intend him to be the Saviour of the Gentiles also, Isa. xlix. 6. and Luk. ii. 32. *Because actually desired by some of the nations*. Though the body of the gentiles was without all knowledge of Christ till he came into the world, yet did some of them actually desire him. Job was a Gentile, and yet he desired Christ long before his incarnation, Job. xix. 25. *I know that my redeemer liveth*. And it is not to be questioned, but that those proselytes who were added to the church of the Jews, did expect the *Messiah* as well as the natural Jews; and they could not serve the Lord acceptably, but through the *Messiah*, and therefore they could not but wait for him as the *Israelites* did.

2. For the word *desire*. *It implies all nations need Christ.* This is *Ribera's* note upon the text. The whole world had been for ever undone without him; the guilt and pollution of sin, hath over-spread all nations, and all persons, Rom. iii. 9. Now there is no way to be delivered from this, but by Jesus. The world's desire of him, shews their indigency and need of him, although there be but few that see their need of him, yet do all absolutely need him; all are filthy, and want a fountain to wash in; all are sick, and stand in need of a Physician; all nations are under spiritual bondage and need a redeemer; all are enemies to God, and need Christ the Mediator. *It implies delight.* Desire is put in scripture, and in profane writers, for delight. *David* speaking of the delight his soul had in the everlasting covenant, calls it *desire*, Sam. xxiii. 5. see also Hosea ix. 16. and Jer. xii. 10. *My pleasant portion*, and Dan. ix. 23. and 1 Kings xx. 6. Bread is called, *Bread of desires*, Dan. x. 3. The desire when accomplished, is sweet to the soul. *Tully* writing to his wife and daughter, concludes his epistle thus: farewell my desires. Christ is delightful in himself, and is the hearts delight of every one that knows what he is, *Unto you that believe he is precious*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. *It implies satisfaction.* A man is satisfied, when he hath the desire of his heart, Psl. xxxvii. 4. *Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart*, that is, he shall give thee satisfaction. Christ is the satisfaction of his people, he fully satisfies the most enlarged desires of the nations; there is no satisfaction without him, but full satisfaction in the enjoyment of him; when the soul hath Christ, then it rests, *I desire to know nothing, but Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. then it hath as much as God can give, or as itself can desire, Psl. lxxiii. 25. *It implies the confluence of all good in Christ.* Desire is the most comprehensive word that can be used, and Jesus is whatsoever is desirable, he is *All and in all*, Col. iii. 11. he is honor, riches, beauty, health, life, peace, salvation. *Bernard* saith, whatsoever a man ought to wish, or can wish, is one Christ. Nothing good, nothing necessary, nothing profitable, but comes under this word desire; when God promises to fulfil the desires of them that fear him, Psl. cxlv. 16. he promises all good, desire comprehends all that can be desired, *It implies the suitableness of Christ to every soul.* As he is a rich, so he is a fit portion to the soul; what

some Jewish writers say of the manna, that it was according to every man's palate, is really true of Christ; he is suitable not only to every man's necessity, but to every man's desire; he is to the soul, whatever it would have him Rev. iii. 18. implies both the variety of good in Christ, and the fitness of Christ to every condition of the soul. Christ is gold to the poor, eye-salve to the blind, raiment to the naked; all things the soul can ever want, and every special good which it doth desire, and therefore is properly called the desire of the soul. 3. Why so many of the gospelized nations reject Christ. That Christ is rejected and despised of many, even where he is daily preached, is too evident, see Isa. liii. 1, 2. The reasons are these: *All are not elected.* 'Tis true as of mankind in general, so of the gospelized nations, *that many are called but few are chosen.* None will ever truly desire Christ, but such as are chosen; *All that the Father hath given me shall come to me.* We see Christ the scorn in our own and other christian nations, this reason is given by himself for the great contempt the world casts upon him, Mat. xxii. init. How Christ and all the tenders of life by him were slighted, you may see in the beginning of the chapter; *Many are called, but few are chosen* see also 1 Pet. ii. 8, 9. *Christ was made to them a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,* because they were thereunto appointed. Want of election, puts no Christ-rejecting principles into the heart, yet cannot any unelected ever really desire him. *All do not see their need of Christ.* 'Tis one thing to have need of Christ, and another thing to be truly sensible of such need. None can ever desire, but such as are affected with the want of him. Though such as have had their education in the church, are principled in the doctrine of man's need of Christ, yet do but few truly understand such necessity; most are conceited that they can make a sufficient shift without him, pride blows up their hearts to make Christs of themselves; see the church of *Laodicea*, iii. 18. she was poor and blind, and miserable, and wretched and naked, yet she thought herself rich, and increased with goods, and to need nothing. It is the general unhappiness of most men to wrap themselves warm in such conceits; and therefore is Christ no more desirable. Those that are whole, will neither desire, nor accept of a Physician when he is tendered to them. *All are not acquainted with*

the worth of Christ. They know not his beauty, nor his excellency, they look upon him as an ordinary person, this makes him so undesirable, see Isa. liii. 2, 3. Christ will be despised by all those that do not see any comeliness in him. Excellency is the load-stone of desires, *Because of the savor of thy ointments, therefore do the virgins love thee,* Cant. i. 3. The greatest part of men in the church, want ability to see these sweet ointments, and therefore so greatly despise him; there never was, nor will be any strong desire after unknown objects. *The desires of most are carried out after other objects.* They have other portions, more desirable to them than Jesus; the mind of man cannot be taken with things of a different nature; *No man can serve two masters.* Now the greatest part of men, even those that live under the gospel, are captivated by strange loves, and therefore do so little desire Christ, see Mat. xxii. init. Had the oxen, the farm, the new married wife been less desirable, Christ had been more so; their hearts were glued to these things, and so disjoined from Christ. *Most have taken up unworthy, and unjust prejudices against Jesus.* The greatest part under the gospel, are offended with Christ some way, or other; his ways are too strict; his yoke too heavy, his work too hard, his encouragement too mean, his servants are too low, his doctrine is too high and sublime and mysterious; we often read of great offence, causelessly taken at Christ; the world is so full of prejudice against him, and so few desire him.

I. For Information. 1. *This shews the amplitude of the church.* The church is but small, if compared with other societies; it's but like a garden, in comparison of the vast campaign of the world, yet if considered absolutely in itself, it's very large, it is of a vast extent, reaching over all the nations of the earth; it was formerly confined within the narrow bounds of *Judea*, but now under the gospel, it reacheth from one end of the world to another, Isa. liv. 2. and Psl. lxxii. 8. *This shews the unity of the church.* Though of a large extent of place, yet it is but one church; *My love, my undefiled, is but one, she is the only one of her mother,* Cant. vi. 9 *One body,* 1 Cor. xii. 13. and Eph. iv. 4. it consists of many members, as the general body doth, yet are all united by the same spirit, into one body. The title here given to Christ, shews as well as the unity, the universality

of the church. Christ is but one, and he is the desire, the head, the centre of the church, dispersed throughout all nations, however differenced by several outward professions and forms. 3. *Those nations that want Jesus have nothing in them greatly desirable.* They may have many things in themselves worthy to be desired; as riches, plenty, peace, but the choice thing of all is Jesus; there's no desirable living in any nation, where Jesus is not; 'tis his presence that makes up the want of all other desires, and sweetens and sanctifies all present desires. It's more comfortable living in a nation, where the sun never shone, than where Christ never came; he is the safety, health, peace, and riches of all nations where he comes; nations are valued desirable, or undesirable, according as they want or enjoy Christ. 4. *This shews the fulness of Christ; it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell,* Col. i. 19. Col. ii. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily.* He is not only able to satisfy the desires of particular persons, but of all nations; he hath merit enough to make satisfaction for the sins of nations; grace enough, to sanctify all nations, Isa. lii. riches enough, to enrich all nations; that nations have no more of Christ, is not from want of fulness in Christ, but for want of fit dispositions to receive from him whatever they want.

II. For Exhortation. 1. *This should provoke in the hearts of all God's people stronger desires after Christ.* 'Tis the great sin of believers, that their desires of Christ are so weak. We can desire health, riches, ease, peace, and life, with more fervency than Christ; he that hath all desirableness in himself, is but very seldom in the desires of his people. This coldness is prejudicial to ourselves, for the less we desire him, the less communion we have with him. Usually Christ's manifestations of himself are proportionable to the soul's desire after him, *The spouse sat under his shadow with great delight,* Cant. ii. 3. She was taken into his banqueting house, where the banner of his love was spread over her; had her desires been weak, Christ would not have taken her into that intimacy. *The less we desire Christ, the more shall we desire other things.* The reasonable soul must have something to delight in; desires are as natural and essential to the soul, as heat is to fire; if it be not taken up with strong desires after Christ, it will with other desires, Psl. lxxiii. 25. *David's desires were so moderate towards*

other things, because he had such strong desires towards God. *The less we desire Christ, the less knowledge shall we have of his desire towards us. I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me, Cant. vii. 10.* It is a mercy that Christ hath his desire on the soul; considering how little desirableness is in the best of us. It's a double mercy to know these desires of Christ, for the stronger our desires towards him are, the fuller assurance may we expect of the manifestation of his desires towards us. One reason why believers understand so little of Christ's desires towards them, is because those desires are so indifferent. As it's prejudicial to ourselves, so it's dishonorable to Christ; it gives occasion to the world to think that he is but an ordinary person; his worth appears to them, as much by the fervency of our desires towards him, as by the report scripture gives of his excellency; they live by sight more than faith; the divine testimony is not believed, but the testimony which the godly gives of his worth is entertained by them, they begin to think with themselves such heats would not continue, if there were not some fire to keep them burning, see Cant. v. 9. 2. *This should put all of us to search, whether we have desires after Christ or no.* We all pretend to desire him; let us therefore examine whether our desires be right or no. *If Christ be truly thy desire, thou dost desire him for himself.* many desire Christ, not for person, but for his portion; this is not to desire Christ, he that desires Christ for any thing but himself, or above himself, doth not at all desire Christ, see Isa. xxvi. 8. *The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.* Christ's name is himself, and he is more desirable than his patrimony, though that also is very great. *If Christ be thy desire, thou wilt universally desire him.* Christ is Prince and Saviour, Acts v. 31. Many desire Christ as a Saviour, that reject him as a Prince; but he that truly desires him, desires him as a Prince, as well as a Saviour. Do you desire his commands as well as his promises? his holiness as well as his happiness? the water as well as the blood? where he is not universally desired in every office, he is not indeed at all desired; he that desires Christ dividedly, desires not the Lord's Christ, but a Christ of his own devising. *If Christ be truly thy desire, thou wilt diligently make use of all means which may assist communion with him.* He that truly desires any object, desires to have the nearest union that's possible with it, therefore he desires every thing which may

help on the union. *Tell me, O thou, whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest*, Cant. xvii. All the divine helps which Christ hath ordained for the begetting, confirming, and increasing communion between himself and his people, will be used and delighted in, and pursued by all to whom Christ is desirable; every spiritual glass in which he may see Christ, he will daily look into; every Sycamore tree in which there is any hopes of seeing Christ, he will often ascend; and is not satisfied with any ordinance, unless he can find Christ in it. *If Christ be truly thy desire, thou wilt desire him above all other objects.* David preferred Jerusalem above his chief joy, and Christ when truly desired, is preferred above the chiefest joy; gold, silver, raiment, friends and relations, are willingly slighted, for the enjoyment of Christ. *I account all things but loss, that I may gain Christ*, Phil. iii. 8. *If Christ be truly desirable, it will be the design of the soul to render him desirable to others.* He will in every company commend Christ, that others may fall in love with him. The woman of Samaria, when Christ had gained her heart, tried to gain the Samaritans to Christ, Joh. iv. 29. The spouse, when her desires were set on fire towards Christ, cast abroad her sparks that she might kindle the same desire in the hearts of others, Cant. v. 10. the soul knows there is enough in Christ for itself, and for others, she believes that her carefulness in bringing in others, will procure more sensible respect from Christ to herself, therefore she is so careful to draw in others. *This should persuade believers to be contented, though they want some other desirable things.* Though you need the gold, silver, houses or lands which others have, yet if you have Christ, you may well be content; he is the chief of desires; all things without him, are contemptible, he is eminently and virtually all things which are desirable; better than house, or lands, or children, or worldly possessions Abraham thought all was nothing, when he wanted Christ, Gen. xv. 2. and the Apostles esteemed nothing as every thing, when they enjoyed Christ; *as having nothing, yet possessing all things*, 2 Cor. vi. 10. He that knows how to extend and improve Christ, may easily find in him the virtue of all that can be desired, and therefore may be content whatever is wanting. *This should persuade the ministers of the gospel, to endeavour to render Christ desirable to their people* They are his servants, and stewards, the friends of the bridegroom, their office is to exalt Christ; the more desirable they can

render him, the more desirable will their office be. *They must endeavour to waken men out of their self-conceitedness.* To let them see the emptiness of all those desirable things in which they have placed contentment. *I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the desire of all nations shall come.* Men must be turned out of possession of their strong holds, before Christ will be truly desirable. Every man by nature hath some natural, some moral, or some religious performance or accomplishment, which is to him a petty Christ; these foundations must be shaken, by discovering their insufficiency and weakness. 'Tis hard to beat men out of these refuges, and yet they must, before Christ will be desirable. *Those things which were gain to me, I counted loss for Christ,* Phil. iii. 7. It's a ministers wisdom to observe what it is, which any of his people values desirable, that he may mar its beauty, and bring down its price, for till this be done, Christ will never be valued at any considerable rate. People must give ministers leave to shake these heavens, else Christ will not be precious. *They must endeavour to discover all the excellencies of Christ;* must unlock the cabinet, and present Christ in all his loveliness. *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.* Scripture sets out the glory of his person, of his office, of his purchase, and the excellency of his privileges. *His name is like precious ointment;* this must be poured forth in the preaching of the gospel, by which he will be rendered desirable to the soul, Cant. i. 3. All a mans own excellencies is brought down, and Christ enhanced, then will he be the only desire of the soul, 2 Cor. ii. 14.

II. For Consolation. 1. *This gives us a foundation of believing the conversion of the unconverted nations to Christ,* he is the desire of all nations, because all nations should be converted unto him; many promises we find in scripture, and many prophecies of the calling of the nations to Christ; some are already converted, many are still in blindness; this title encourages and confirms our hope of this great work. Christ hath not taken unto himself, God hath not given him this title in vain, he that is already the actual desire of so many nations, will in due time make himself the desire of all the rest; let it strengthen our faith, and quicken our prayers, for the completing of this great work. 2. *This may comfort us against the want of desirableness in ourselves.* It's a matter of great sorrow, to consider how destitute saints are

of all desirableness; we find much in ourselves why we should be loathed of God, despised of men, and abhorred of ourselves, but why either God or men should desire us, we cannot see; what the carnal heart saith unjustly of Christ, *That there is neither form nor comeliness in him.* That the spiritual heart thinks justly of itself. A believer sees much sin accompanying all his desirable duties, and all his desirable accomplishments; here is comfort, though you have nothing desirable in yourselves, your Christ is every way desirable, and all his desirable things are as much yours as his; his righteousness, grace, and spirit, are all yours, when therefore satan and your own hearts, say that you are destitute of all desirable good, answer, that Christ who is yours, wants nothing which either men or God can desire, though full of blemishes in yourselves, yet you are full of desires as considered in Christ. Cant. i. 6. *I am black, but comely, O you daughters of Jerusalem;* black by nature, comely by grace, black in your eye, comely in Christ's by reason of that comeliness he had put upon her. Hence a believer clothed with Christ, is so lovely in the eyes of God, that God loves him with the very same love wherewith he loves Christ. *That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.* There is in Jesus, what doth abundantly satisfy for all thine undesirableness. Set his fulness against thy emptiness, his beauty against thy deformity, his glory against thy shame, his wealth against thy poverty, his desirableness against thy undesirableness, and herein thou wilt see cause of rejoicing.

II. Doct. Christ coming in the flesh. *Christ's coming in the flesh was kept alive in all the ages of the church.* The first promise of Christ's incarnation was made to Adam, immediately upon his fall, Gen. iii. 15. from that time to the manifestation of Christ, was this mystery preserved in the church. There were two famous ways by which it was kept, first, by sacrifices; second, by prophecies. The sacrifices typified the offering up of Christ, see Heb. ix. through out. Every bullock, or lamb, offered under the law, did visibly and lively manifest Christ's incarnation, and oblation of himself, for the expiation of sin. The prophecies were solemn repetitions of the first promise, and both sacrifices and prophecies were often repeated. Most of the prophets did frequently preach the incarnation,

especially the royal *Isaiah*, see c. iv. 2. and c. ix. 6. where he sings, *To us a child is born, to us a Son is given*. None of the evangelists do speak more fully of the incarnation, passion, merits, and kingdom of Christ, than he, and therefore he was by the ancients called the fifth evangelist. *Jeremiah* after *Isaiah* likewise prophesied much of him, see c. xxiii. 5, 6. *I will raise up unto David a righteous branch, &c.* and c. xxxi. 32. he speaks of the miracle of his birth, *A woman shall compass a man*. *Ezekiel* speaks of Christ, as a shepherd, c. xxxiv. 23. and a plant of renown, v. 19. *Daniel* speaks both of his incarnation, and his cutting off, c. ix. 6. *After three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself*. Though they endeavour to apply it to *Hircanus* the High-Priest, who was cut off by *Herod*, yet as our Annotators shew, that the things spoken of the *Messiah* are too great to be attributed to any person but to Christ our Saviour. *Micah* speaks of the place of his birth, and of the glory of his kingdom, c. v. 2. *Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, &c.* *Zachariah* prophesies fully of him, c. iii. 8. *I will bring forth my servant the branch, and c. vi. 12. The man whose name is the branch, he shall grow up out of his place, &c.* *Malachi* prophesies of him, as the messenger of the covenant, and of his coming to the temple, c. iii. 1. and *Haggai* in the text prophesies of him, *as the desire of all nations*. God hath taken care, that this doctrine should be ever found in the church.

I. I shall shew why God would have it so often repeated.

II. Why the Jews notwithstanding the inculcations of this doctrine, did reject Christ when he came,

I. God would have this so often taught, 1. *Because it was of that absolute necessity, that the church could not expect salvation without it*; all their happiness did depend upon this. By Christ's coming, justice was to be satisfied, pardon obtained, and heaven purchased, there could neither be temporal, nor eternal happiness without this; he was both the sin and the peace offering; if Christ had not come, the covenant had been of no effect, for he was the sum of it, *Isa. xlii. 6.* sin could never have been expiated, for he is the only propitiation for sin, *1 Joh. ii. 2.* the curse had never been removed, for by him were all the elect to be delivered from the curse, *Gal. iii. 13.* and the powers of dark-

ness had never been vanquished, for he was *to break the Serpent's head*, Gen. iii. 15. Now because it was a doctrine of such necessity and importance, God would have it often repeated. 2. *It was a doctrine hard to be believed.* 'Tis granted that a divine revelation is enough for faith; yet of all divine revelations, Christ's incarnation seems most impossible, it is the first of the mysteries of godliness, 1 Tim. iii. 16. What a world of difficulties are there in this work, that *A virgin should conceive and bring forth a child*, Isa. vii. 4. That the ancient of days, should become an infant! That he who only hath immortality, should become mortal! That the invisible God, should be seen with the eyes of the body! That he who is Lord of all, should be made a servant! That he who bears up the world, should be borne in the arms of his creatures! How hard was it to believe these sublime mysteries, especially considering how busy the Devil was, to set off the heart from closing with them; it was needful, that a thing so hard to be believed, should be often repeated. 3. *It was a truth, that was not for a long time to be fulfilled.* There were about four thousand years between the first promise, or prophecy of Christ, and his birth. The faith of the elect would have expired, had there not been frequent repeatings of it; every new generation needed new foretellings of this great mystery, both that they themselves might believe it, and might transmit it to the generation following.

II. Why the Jews notwithstanding all this, did reject him. That they did reject him, is clear from the gospel, which shews that they took offence at him, opposed, and afterwards killed him; the reasons beside the determinate counsel of God, Joh. xii. 40. are 1. *Christ did not come in that outward splendor, as they imagined.* The generality of the Jews, mistaking the prophecies of the glory of Christ, did conceive that he should come invested with external majesty, like the Kings of the earth, that he should deliver them from the *Romans*, restore again the Kingdom of *Israel*, and raise up the tabernacle of *David* in a worldly way, see Joh. vi. 15. Christ did not answer their expectations, but came low and mean, in the form of a servant, and therefore did the Jews despise and reject him, as one unworthy to be called the *Messiah* promised to their Fathers, Mat. xiii. 55, 57. The very Apostles were under this mistake, even after Christ's resurrection, Acts i. 6. they dreamed of a secular

Kingdom. 2. *Christ's natural descent was from those who dwell amongst them.* They supposed through their ignorance in the prophecies, that the *Messiah* should have such a descent that no man should know his parents, now they know Christ's descent, therefore rejected him, see Joh. vii. 26, 27. perhaps their mistake did arise from, Isa. liii. 8. Whatever the ground was, it is clear, they had such a received tradition, that no man should know whence the *Messiah* came. 3. *Christ's preaching was so heavenly and strict, that the generality of the Jews could not bear it.* He expounded the law in its spirituality, Mat. v. 21, &c. He taught men to deny themselves, to hate their own lives for his sake and the gospels; he preached down their vain traditions and formality, and preached up spiritual worship, &c. 4. *Christ tendered grace and mercy to the greatest of sinners, and kept company with publicans and sinners for their good.* This offended many Jews, who looked upon him as a friend of publicans and sinners, a gluttonous man, &c. they did not consider that he came as a Physician to cure the sick, Mat. ix. 10, 11. 5. *The followers of Christ were mean and low in outward respects.* His Apostles were fishermen, and his usual adherents of ordinary rank, this did cause many, especially the great ones to reject him, see Mat. xi. 5, 6.

The uses are these. 1. *The exceeding great mercy of God to the church of the Jews.* This appears divers ways; they were the first vineyard God ever had, he had planted them, gathered them, formed them into a church, and set his ordinances amongst them, Rom. iii. 1, 2. he was their portion, and they his. The *Messiah* was promised to them; descended from them; was first tendered to them, &c. It was one proof of the favor God bore to them, that the Incarnation of Christ, was by the continual preaching of the Prophets, kept alive amongst them, until the *Messiah* did personally come. *The unexcusableness of the sin of the Jews in rejecting Jesus.* They might have seen all things prophesied of the *Messiah*, fulfilled in the person of the Son of *Mary*, and yet with how much vehemency did they reject him. A man can hardly tell which is most astonishing, the love of God, and Christ in tendering himself to them, or their madness and malice, in rejecting him; never was the sin of any people less capable of excuse than the Jews; *they hated me without cause.* Though they were so often put in mind of his coming before the Incarnation, and saw his divine miracles after the

Incarnation, yet did they in contempt reject him; *If I had not done amongst them the works which no other man did, they had had no sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin, Joh. xv. 22. yea, v. 24.* Christ concludes that they did it out of hatred. *Now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.*

3. *How necessary it is that truths of great importance should be often inculcated in the church.* We find both in the Prophets and Apostles, the same thing repeated over and over again. *Man's memory is very brittle, a leaking vessel, Heb. ii. 1.* Sin hath cracked this golden bowl, that it can now retain nothing perfectly; the repeating of things over and over, is the best help for a frail memory. *Man's affections are cold and much distempered as to heavenly things.* We have as little heat in the affections, as we have retentiveness in the memory. 'Tis hard to get any spiritual lesson into the heart, and as hard to preserve it; a dull heart and dead affections need to have truth often chafed into them. *Man meets with much opposition.* The Devil without, and lust within, hinder the retaining and improving of divine truths; what is gained in one sermon, perisheth before the next. The fowls of the air pick up a great part of the seed which is sown, that unless new seed be sown, nothing but briars and thorns would spring up. *To write the same things again, to me is not grievous, but for you it is safe.* God would not have put the same message into the mouths of so many of his Prophets, if there were not both benefit and necessity in repeating the same things. *That God wills his people should be much in the meditation of Christ's coming in the flesh.* As the meditation of this was needful and profitable to the Jews, so will its frequent remembrance be still profitable to us. The New Testament inculcates this as frequently, and as fully as the Old. Though christians have not need as the Jews had, to be confirmed in its expectation, yet they have need of its remembrance; it will help us, *to see sins vileness*, that could not be expiated without the Incarnation and sufferings of the Son of God. *To testify the condescension of Christ, for our sakes.* His Incarnation is one step of his humiliation, and a low step it was, that he, higher than the highest Angel, should become as low as the vilest of men. *It will help our faith in believing Jesus to be the Messiah which God had promised*, because, we shall find accomplished in his person, all that was foretold to be done or suffered by the Messiah. *It will help us to believe the expiation of*

sin. Its profitable for a believer to furnish himself with all helps that may strengthen his faith, in the expiation of sin, this is one of the strongest; for the end of Christ's incarnation was, that by his death he might expiate sin. *It will help us to believe the great doctrine of his second coming.* God would have his people often musing upon this 2 Pet. iii. 12. Much advantage comes to the soul by such meditations; we should think on that as much as the Jews did of the first coming; the Apostles insist on this, as much as the Prophets did on that. Now meditating on his first coming, will confirm our belief of his other coming, which will be to perfect the work he did at his first coming, the salvation of the elect; the Apostle therefore puts them together, Heb, ix. ult.

SERMON XXXVIII. ISA. 42---6.

"I will give thee for a covenant of the people."

IN this chapter four things are prophesied concerning Christ.

1. *The divine call.* Behold my servant whom I uphold; I will put my spirit upon him, v. 5, 6. Thus saith God the Lord, I have called thee, and in righteousness. Let those that rush into callings, consider this. Christ, though the Son of God, durst not undertake this great work, till he had a call from heaven.
2. *The gracious carriage and deportment of Christ,* v. 2, 3, 4. He shall not cry, nor suffer his voice to be heard in the streets. He shall come clothed with majesty, and yet full of meekness; A bruised reed shall he not break, the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall acknowledge and encourage the weakest degrees of grace. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth; though he shall be meek towards humbled sinners, yet he will not flatter any in their sins. He shall not fail nor be discouraged: these shew his magnanimity; though he should meet with opposition, yet shall he valorously carry on his work. The divine assistance he should have, v. 6. I will hold thy hand, I will keep thee. When God sets his servants to work, he uses to uphold and defend them in it. The work itself, v. 6, 7. To be a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the

prisoners from the prisons, and in the text, to be a covenant of the people, one of those principle works for which Christ was given to his church; in which we have, 1. One special part of Christ's office, *given for a covenant*. 2. The persons in reference to whom this office was designed, *a covenant of the people*. The observation is, *That Christ was given of the Father, for a covenant unto his people*, c. xlix. 8. Three things are to be opened by way of explication:

I. What covenant is here meant.

II. To whom is Christ given for a covenant.

III. In what respects he is called a covenant.

I. What covenant is here meant. A covenant is a solemn compact made between several parties, whereby they firmly bind themselves to each other in certain articles, to the mutual satisfaction of each. There are three things which have affinity, and yet differ one from the other; a purpose, a promise, a covenant. A purpose differs from a promise, and a covenant, because it is not binding. A man may purpose to do a thing, and afterwards break off his purpose, because it doth not bind him. A promise differs from a covenant, because it lays an obligation only upon him that makes the promise, (supposing the promise to be lawful.) A covenant differs from both, because it lays a firm obligation upon several parties, and is more solemn, pledges being usually taken and received on every side. There is in every covenant, a mutual stipulation between the parties covenanting; whereby they are equally bound, in certain articles and agreements, consented to by each. Now there are two sorts of covenants, 1. Civil covenants made between man and man. *Abimelech* and *Abraham* made a covenant at *Beer-sheba*, Gen. xxi. 32. *Jacob* and *Laban* in mount *Gilead*, Gen. xxxi. 44. 2. Religious covenants made between God and men, of these, there are two famous kinds; the covenant of works, made in the state of innocency, Gen. ii. 16, 17. in which God promised *Adam*, for himself and posterity, life and happiness, upon the condition of perfect personal, and perpetual obedience; threatening death in case of disobedience; and *Adam* promised to God, perfect obedience to his law, written upon his heart, particularly to that positive law, that he should not eat of the *tree of knowledge of good and evil*. The other after the fall, Gen. iii. 15. this covenant was afterwards renewed with *Abraham*, Gen. xii. 3. with

Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 4. and with *Jacob*, Gen. xxviii. 14. In this is eternal life, and salvation promised to man upon the glorious condition of faith in Christ; it is called sometimes a Testament, Heb. vii. 22. Because of the death of Christ the Testator; sometimes a new covenant, in opposition to the former one, made before the fall, that the Apostle calls *the law of works*, this *the law of faith*, Rom. iii. 27. The text speaks of this latter covenant. Christ the mediator had nothing to do in the first covenant, *Adam* was its head. There was no mediator between God and man needed in that covenant; it was a covenant of friendship, but this is the covenant of grace, made to bring man to life, and salvation, after his sinful violation, of the first covenant.

II. To whom is Christ given as a covenant? *By people is meant the Jews*, opposed to the Gentiles. *A covenant of the people, a light unto the Gentiles.* Christ is given for a covenant, both to the believing Jews and Gentiles; as he is *the glory of the people of Israel*, so he is *a light to enlighten the Gentiles*, Luk. ii. 32. The Jews are principally mentioned for three reasons. 1. *Because Christ according to his human nature, did descend from them, he was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh*, Rom. i. 3. *This rod came forth out of the stem of Jesse*, Isa. xi. 1. He was born, and educated amongst the Jews, and therefore is in a peculiar manner a covenant of them. 2. *Because this covenant was first stricken with them.* Before the partition wall was taken down, the Jews only were the people of God, Rom. ix. 4. The Gentiles were for many ages strangers from the covenant of promise, Eph. ii. 12. 3. *Because when Christ should come in the flesh, the covenant of grace was first tendered to them; when he sent out his Disciples to preach salvation, he gave them this commission: Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any of the Cities of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, Mat. x. 5, 6. and c. xv. 24. He told the woman of Canaan, that he *was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. To them, he himself preached this covenant; to them his Apostles also preached, and it was not published to the Gentiles, till the Jews did reject it, and cast it off, Acts xiii. 46. In these respects the Jews are first mentioned, not as if they were the only people, to whom the covenant was given, for the elect Gentiles have as much interest in it as they. *I will give thee for a light unto the Gentiles, that thou*

mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth, Isa. xlix. 6. Christ came from heaven, not only to raise up the tribes of *Jacob*, and to restore the preserved of *Israel*, but also to say to the prisoners of the Gentiles, go forth, and to them that are in darkness, shew yourselves; he was given to inherit the desolate heritages of the Gentiles, *Isa. xlix. 8. and Gen. xii. 3. In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* God in all ages gleaned up some Gentiles, and made them proselytes; as fore-runners, yea, as pledges of the bringing in of their whole body, to believe in Christ.

III. Why Christ is called a covenant. 1. *He is the head of the covenant.* Adam was the head of the covenant of works; Christ, of the covenant of grace, it is built upon him, and made with him; he is the head of the election, and of the covenant, in whom all the elect are covenanters. The covenant of grace was not primarily and immediately made to believers, but first to Christ the head, and then in him to the members, hence he is called, *The mediator of the new and better covenant, Heb. xii. 24.* It is by virtue of his entering into covenant with God, that we are in covenant; fallen man was not only unworthy, but unmeet to covenant immediately with the holy God, therefore did Jesus offer himself as our head, to make a covenant with God for us; hence *2 Cor. i. 20. All the promises of God are in him.* As Adam was the root of the first, so is Christ of this second covenant. 2. *Christ is the purchaser and procurer of the covenant.* Christ was contented to pay such a price as should satisfy the justice of God, which price was his blood; by this, he purchased us to himself, and a covenant of salvation for us. Man had sold himself by his fall, he was in the enemies full possession; without a price he could not be redeemed. Christ came to redeem them that were under the law, *Gal. iv. 5.* By the same blood, he purchased from God, a covenant of peace for them, *The blood of the Testament, Heb. ix. 20.* 'Tis the blood of Christ the Testator that hath purchased this Testament, or covenant for us, see *Isa. liii. 10. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, and prolong his days.* This expiatory sacrifice which Christ offered up to God, was the price of the covenant, which great charter is written with the precious blood of Christ. 3. *Christ is the substance of the covenant,* it consists of several glorious privileges, but the marrow of all is Christ, he is the centre of all the gospel,

which is nothing else but salvation by Christ; and he is the center of the covenant; all its privileges and promises are some way or other reducible to him. Take Christ out of the covenant, and it is an empty thing; he is its *Alpha and Omega*. *Christ is mine*, comprehends the whole matter of the covenant of God. 4. *He is the messenger of the covenant*, Mal. iii. 1. He published the covenant, by the Prophets, for his spirit was in them, 1 Pet. i. 11.; afterwards in his own person, Eph. ii. 17. When he was ascended, by the Apostles, Mar. xvi. 15. and still by the ministry, instituted to continue to the end of the world, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. 5. *Christ is the surety of the covenant*, Heb. vii. 22. *the surety of a better Testament*. Christ is the undertaker of the covenant and of all its terms. He undertakes on God's part, that all he hath promised shall be made good to the believers; this he doth, 1. *By his word*, see Joh. v. 24. *He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life*. One great end of Christ's ministry, was to insure his people all the promises of the gospel; and still by his ministers, he assures the world, that if they close with God upon the account of his covenant, they shall have the real performance of all the good therein contained. 2. *By the shedding of his blood*. His blood was poured out, to ratify that all that was promised in the covenant, should be made good. *Paræus* says his blood-shed is for confirmation of the covenant, as well as for its purchase; when he instituted the supper, he took the cup saying, *This is the new Testament in my blood*, Mat. xxvi. 28. that is, all good in the covenant shall be sure to all for whom I die. 3. *By the sacraments*. One end both of baptism, and the supper, is to ratify the covenant, for they are both outward seals of the covenant. 4. *By his spirit*. Jesus gives his spirit do dwell in his people, as a divine pledge, that what God hath promised in his covenant, he will certainly make good; there are three which bear record in earth; *the spirit, water, and blood*; the spirit is a sealing spirit, and is given as a divine testimony, that the whole covenant shall be fulfilled, *We have received the spirit of God, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 12. The spirit reveals to us, that we have an interest in them. 2. *Christ is the surety of the covenant on our part*. He undertakes for us to the Father, that we shall close with it, and shall walk answerable to it;

there are two things required of those in the covenant with God; faith to believe it, and obedience to express our thankfulness for it. Christ hath solemnly engaged to the Father, as the surety of his elect, to work in them both these graces, which he fulfils by his gospel, and ministers, Eph. iv. 11, &c. and by *the spirit of faith*, 2 Cor iv. 13. and *the spirit of holiness*, Rom. i. 4 who works faith and holiness in their hearts, whereby they are enabled to close with the covenant believingly, and to walk suitably to that holy engagement, which the covenant lays upon them; this Christ hath undertaken, and will make good to all his elect.

1. Information. 1. *That all salvation centers in Christ.* All is wrapt up in the covenant. *This is all my desire, and all my salvation*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. and the covenant is wrapt up in Christ, yea, is nothing but Christ represented in several expressions, see Eph. i. 3. The Apostle notes our election by him, v. 4. our adoption, v. 5. our redemption, and remission of sins, v. 7. All the gracious transactions between God and his people are through Christ. God loves us, hears our prayers, gives us freedom of access to his throne, forgives us all our sins, justifies us, sanctifies us, upholds us, and saves us through Christ; all we have is from him, all we expect to have, hangs upon him, he is the golden image, upon which all our salvation turns. 2. *The necessity of Christ's death.* There was no necessity why God should part with his son. God and Christ might have suffered man who voluntarily sinned to have perished remedilessly for his sin; it was free love, not necessity which brought Christ from heaven, but as Christ is given for a covenant to his people, there is a necessity of his death, see Heb. ix. 16, 17. A necessity there was, that he should at last shed his blood, because the covenant with all its benefits, was purchased, sealed and ratified by his blood, and he could not have been a covenant of his people, if he had not died. 3. *That those that have no peculiar interest in Christ, enjoy nothing which they possess, through a covenant.* There are two springs, whereby men enjoy the gifts of God; common bounty, and special grace. A believer holds all in grace, *All things are yours, and ye are Christs*, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Health, wealth, life, food, clothing, and all other outward enjoyments are a believers, by a covenant tenure; this is a singular mercy. One penny possessed this way, is better than ten thousand talents held only by

common providence. What a man holds by the covenant of grace, *He hath God's love with it*, Prov. xv. 17. *God's spiritual blessing with it*, Psl. iii. 8. *A sanctified use of it*, 1 Cor. vii. 14. *It shall turn to his best advantage*, Psl. xxv. 10. Any thing held by covenant is better than all things held by providence only; he hath *all things*, when he *possess nothing*, 2 Cor. vi. 10. but without grace he possesseth nothing, when he seems to have all things. Now the unbeliever can hold nothing through the covenant, because Christ is both its purchaser, and ratifier. *This is to enjoy mercies just as the beasts*, for *God openeth his hand and filleth the mouth of every living creature*, Psl. cxlv. 15, 16. *There is no certainty of the continuation of mercies that are only thus enjoyed*. When a man possess mercies through the covenant, he may conclude his children and riches shall remain, while they are for his best advantage; but things held only by common providence, give no certain ground to believe that they shall continue a day longer; man can plead no right to them, no obligation from God, for their continuance, as a believer may. *Mercies held out of covenant, are real curses to their possessors*. As the crosses which befall a believer though materially crosses, are formally blessings; so the blessings which an unbeliever possesses, are really curses. God threatens to curse the disobedient in their basket, and in their store, Deu. xxviii. 17, &c. Every unbeliever in a spiritual sense, is cursed in his basket, &c. his purse is as full of curse, as of money; his granaries are as full of curses, as of corn; blessings to him are not blessings, because Christ is not his. 4. *The glory of the covenant of grace above the first covenant*. The first covenant is not to be disparaged it was glorious and honorable. It was a great mercy, that God would stoop so low as to covenant with his creature. The two covenants agree in divers respects. *In their efficiency*; the same God that made the covenant with Adam, Gen. ii. 16. made the covenant of grace after the fall, Gen. iii. 15. and Gen. xii. 1, &c. *In the common end*. The great end of both covenants was the glory of God, and happiness of man. *In the outward form*. Both of them were obligatory yet doth this latter covenant, far exceed the other in glory, because Christ is its substance and foundation. There are four excellencies in this covenant of grace, which are grounded upon this consideration, that Christ is in it, whereby it excels the former. *It shews that it hath a more*

glorious condition than that. The condition of that was; do this, and thou shalt live. The condition of this is; believe in Christ, and thou shalt be saved, which is far more glorious than depending upon our personal obedience. *That the power to perform this covenant is far more glorious.* Man himself was the foundation of that covenant, and therefore, its performance was by the power of created grace; Christ is the foundation of this, and therefore are all its duties performed by the power of Christ, *I can do all things through Christ, that strengthens me*, Phil. iv. 13. It is observable therefore, that whatever is required in this covenant, by way of command, is somewhere or other held forth by way of promise see Ezek. xviii. 31. *Cast away all your transgressions, make you a new heart*, compared with Ezek. xxxvi. 26. *From all your filthiness, I will cleanse you, a new heart will I give you.* Faith is required, and promised, unto you it is given to believe. The fear of God is commanded, and promised, *I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall never depart from me.* If Christ be the covenant, strength to perform it must needs be from him. Now this is far more glorious, than to act by the strength of created grace, though that were both sufficient and glorious. *It shews that the promises of this covenant, are more glorious than the promises of the first one.* They were excellent promises, life, fruition of communion with God, and whatever else was comprized in that covenant; but the promises of this are:—I will be thy God; I will give thee my Son; I will give thee my spirit; these were not so much as mentioned in that; this is a *better covenant, established on better promises*, Heb. viii. 6. Everlasting life, and all the good which believers enjoy, is in the face of Jesus, which is a far more glorious way, than that by which the good of the first covenant was to be enjoyed. *That strangers to Christ, are strangers to all the good of the covenant.* Eph. ii. 12. *Without Christ, and strangers from the covenants of promise.* A stranger to the one must be to the other, because Christ is both the foundation and substance of this covenant; it is nothing else but Christ expounded, interpreted, and drawn out at length. The first covenant did extend equally to all mankind, but the second is made only with the elect; God calls *Christ his elect*, v. 1. and in the Text, promises to *give him for a covenant of the people*, that is, to Jews and Gentiles elected in him; Christ is the head of the election, and of the cove-

nant; these two are of the same extent. The covenant of grace, in its external administration, belongs to all that live in the church visible; but in special propriety, it belongs only to the spiritual seed, Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8. Though the carnal seed did enjoy the covenant, in its external administration, yet in its saving privilege it was peculiar to the spiritual seed; he that cannot prove himself a believer, must let the covenant alone for ever. Nor is it any disparagement to the covenant of grace, that it doth not extend as far as the covenant of works did; its glory lies not so much in its extent, as in the exceeding glorious privileges it conveys to its heirs. *That there can be no salvation without Christ*, Acts iv. 12. because there is no salvation but through the covenant of grace, and no covenant of grace but through Christ. Those that think men may be saved by any religion, deny the advantage that comes by Christ, and this covenant. God needed not have given Christ as a covenant, if any religion would bring man to salvation. *The firmness and certainty of the covenant, and of all its promises*, Isa. lv. 3. God's unchangeableness will make it good, his faithfulness will ratify it, Christ will establish it, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. certain it must be, because Christ himself is its purchaser, founder, substance, and ratifier. *Those that are without Christ, are still under the covenant of works.* All men are either under the covenant of works, or of grace; such as are actually uninterested in Christ, are uninterested in the covenant of grace, and so are under the covenant of works, see Rom. vii. 1, 2, 3. *All Adam's seed are married to one of these husbands, either to the law, or to Christ; he that is not spiritually married to Christ, is still under the law, as a covenant of works, even as the wife is under the law of her husband, while he is yet alive.* The moral law hath different respects, it is a glass, and shews us both our spots, and our duty; the law is a *light*, and the commandment is a *lamp*; Psl. cxix. 105. And *Paul* confesseth, that he had not known sin but by the law, Rom. vii. 7. In this the believer is under the law as well as others, he hath still need of the directive power of the law; it is a golden bridle, which God useth to check the wanton heart, and keep it from sin, Psl. xvii. 4. *By the words of thy lips, I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.* Thus also it concerns the godly as well as the wicked; it is that spiritual spur which God uses to stir up the sluggish souls of men to holy duties, thus it concerns the best as well

as worst; it is a covenant, as it is a condition which men must perform if they expect salvation, Gal. iv. 21. And in this sense is called the law of works, and opposed to the gospel. *The law of faith*, Rom. iii. 27. In this respect it hath only reference to unbelievers, who are under its dominion; as the condition of the covenant of works, because they are strangers to Christ and his covenant; how sad it is to be under this covenant, these particulars shew, *By this covenant, the best duty is rejected for the least miscarriage. Cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the law of God to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. Hence the very best duties of unregenerated men are abhorred of God, Isa. i. 11, 12. The duties of believers by virtue of the covenant of grace, are accepted of God, though they have many blots in them, 2 Cor. viii. 12. But the most glorious duties of such as are under the covenant of works, are loathsome to God, if the least mistake accompany them. The covenant of works, deals with men according to the most exact terms of strict justice, it allows not any gracious interpretations, as the covenant of grace doth, the very least failure exposes to wrath, for this is not a covenant of mercy, but of pure justice. *This covenant hath no mediator.* When breaches are made between God and man, under the covenant of grace, there is a mediator to interpose, but here, there is none to interpose, but man lies open to the smitings of God's wrath. Christ bears a double person towards believers, the person of God the Father, to dispense the good things of God to them; and the person of the believer, to present his services to the Father. Now to all unbelievers, Christ only represents the person of God, to dispense to them his wrath and fury, for *God hath committed all judgment to his Son*, Joh. v. 22. he doth not represent their persons to God, to offer their services for them; his blood doth not sprinkle them, nor his incense sweeten their duties, they are left to themselves to stand or fall by their own actings. *They that are under this covenant, must of necessity perish.* The case stands thus, *Adam* broke this covenant, and so brought a curse upon himself, and all his seed, Rom. v. 12. in his sin, all men sinned; so that now if any of *Adam's* posterity could walk, as never actually to transgress the covenant by personal miscarriage, which no man can do, yet as he is involved in the first transgression of the covenant, he must needs perish without a Saviour. This is the miserable con-

dition of all under the covenant of works, and in this condition are all who are uninterested in Christ.

II. For Consolation. Who can utter that strong rich comfort, for all that have an interest in Christ? 1. *Comfort against your own unworthiness.* When a child of God, reads the promises of the everlasting covenant, he is put to a stand and cannot tell how to believe, that such possessions should be instated upon him; he doth exceedingly prize them, and judges the heirs of them happy, but his sinfulness causes misgiving thoughts, that he is none of those, for whom such excellent things are prepared. This text will relieve the soul against such ungrounded fears. Jesus is both the purchaser, and foundation of the covenant, and of all its privileges, and however unworthy he is, to whom the privileges of the covenant are given, yet Christ is worthy that all those for whom he hath purchased should enjoy it. All the worthiness of Christ is the believers, and, therefore, through that worthiness, he is worthy to inherit that which is through grace settled upon him. If a rich man purchase a great inheritance for a beggar, and that beggar has nothing of his own, yet he is worthy to be accounted the heir of the inheritance. Glory itself, and all the good things possessed by the Saints, to prepare them for it, are called a purchase possession, Eph. i. 14. The poorest, weakest Saint, hath as good a title to all the things of the covenant, as God's free donation, and Christ's blood can confer upon them. Lift up your drooping hearts O believers! do not make your own unworthiness a bar to comfort. God looks not upon your sin in this case, do not you look upon it; let it suffice you, that while the least blessing of the covenant is too good for you in yourselves, the greatest is not too good for them, for whom Christ hath bought it; yea, a believer may through Christ, plead for the good things of the covenant, not only in mercy, but in justice also, *If we confess our sins, he is just to forgive us them*, 1 Joh. i. 9. All covenant blessings, are not only acts of mercy, but through Christ, are acts of righteousness. 2. *Against your own inability to bring your hearts to the terms of the covenant.* God requires all who are in covenant with him, to believe, to put off sin, and to walk in universal obedience before him; not as a condition of the covenant, (faith is the only condition,) but to testify thankfulness, and to honor God and his covenant; he will have his people a holy, as well as a believing people. A

Saint finds himself unable to work faith in his heart, iniquities prevail over him, and from hence fears arise, that he shall never enjoy the good of the covenant. This text comforts the soul against these fears. Christ is the covenant, not only its purchaser, but its surety, he hath engaged to God to bring all for whom he purchased the covenant, to fulfil its terms; *All that the Father hath given me shall come to me*, Joh. vi. 37. He can bring thee off from self-bottoms, and enable thee to believe on himself; he can subdue thy unbelief, make thy heart holy, conquer all thy corruption, bless ordinances that are weak, and bring thy heart to God, as he hath brought in the heart of God to thee, and what is defective in thee, is fully made up in the obedience of Christ.

3. *Against thy frequent violation of the terms of the covenant.* Believers having corruption in them, too often break with God, and provoke him to anger, and so give him just cause to cut them short of covenant privileges; yet will not God cast them off, because Christ is their covenant. Breaches made in the first covenant were irreparable, but in this covenant are not so, because this is established in Christ; he repairs it, and when God and the believer are at odds by sin, Christ reconciles God again: the covenant being founded on him, is everlasting; he hath died once, but intercedes for ever, Heb. vii. 25. The believer must repent and be humbled for his sin, and then through Christ is God appeased. Every sin doth not break the covenant between God and the soul; *The mountains may depart, or the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, nor the covenant of my peace be removed*, Isa. liv. 10.

III. For Exhortation. 1. *To put all upon the scrutiny, whether Christ be given to them for a covenant or no.* The covenant is built on Christ, he that hath not Christ hath not the covenant, Eph. ii. 16. How shall I know whether Christ be savingly given to me as a covenant? I shall propound three things in this great case. *Where Christ is given as a covenant, the soul gives itself to Christ*, Cant. ii. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his.* Dost thou choose Christ for thine in all respects, then hath he chosen thee for his; our love is a testimony of his, *We love him because he loved us first*, 1 Joh. iv. 19. 'Tis by virtue of his choosing us, that we choose him; let weak christians consider it especially. Dost thou disown all others, and say to Christ, I am thine, and am resolved to be thine for ever? then be sure that he is

thine for ever. *Where Christ is given for a covenant, he is given for a commander. Behold, I have given him for a leader and commander to the people, Isa. lv. 3, 4.* He that is partaker of the covenant, submits to the commanding power of Christ, who is ever a ruler where he is a covenant. Do ye shake off Christ's commanding power? Christ is not given yet to you for a covenant, your boasting of Christ is vain. Do ye find your heart closing with every command of his, at least in affection? then he is certainly given as a covenant to you; as they said to Gideon, Judg. viii. 22. *Rule thou over us, for thou hast saved us from the hand of Midian*, then thou art in covenant with him, else thou could not be so desirous to obey him. *Where Christ is given as a covenant, he is given as a pattern, a leader to the people, Isa. lv. 4.* Christ was incarnate, to be an example of holiness, 1 Pet. ii. 21. such an example as a master sets his scholar. Christ's life is a copy, according to which we are to write, 1 Joh. ii. 6. Are ye as much in love with the meekness, patience, and holiness of Christ's life, as with the merit of his death? Surely then is Christ in covenant with you, and ye with him. If thy soul desire, in all imitable things, to make Christ thy pattern, thou mayest be confident that he is thy covenant, but he that walks in the Devil's way, and hates Christ's example, is not yet in covenant with Christ. *Acknowledge all the good of the covenant to be from Christ, Eph. i. 3.* He is both the fountain and conduit of all saving blessings; had not he been yours, nothing but wrath had been yours; he is your peace, pardon, and hope. All saving things are for and by Christ. *Be sure to plead Christ with God for any covenant blessing.* God loves to hear his name mentioned with faith, and sincerity; be it justification, sanctification, provision, or protection, it must come through Christ, in whose name all is promised, and desired. *Cast yourselves confidently on God through Christ;* he delights to see his people act confidence in him through Christ. *Exalt Christ,* let him be dear to you, render him as precious as you can to others: It proves that Christ is yours for a covenant, if you try to make him great. *You that would have an interest in the covenant, get an interest in Christ,* intreat him, that he would be yours; break off confederacies with your sins, and Christ will strike a covenant with you, Isa. lv. 2, 3.

SERMON XXXIX. 1 TIM. 1--1.

Which is our hope?

THIS is part of the inscription of the Epistle, and one glorious title of Christ. *Paul* having mentioned his calling to the apostleship, to be from Christ, gives him two titles which had rendered him precious to himself, and which should commend him to *Timothy*, and to all the believers. 1. He is our Saviour. 2. He is our hope. Hope is here put without the object, but it may be easily gathered from the context; that Christ which is our Saviour, is our hope of salvation. Hope is put sometimes for the thing hoped for, Col. i. 5. Glory is called the hope laid up for the believers in heaven; sometimes for the foundation of hope, in this sense it is used in the text. Here are two parts, 1. The title of Christ, *the hope of salvation*. 2. The persons to whom this title is appropriated, they are believers, *Our hope*. All believers have one common interest, one and the same hope, *There is one faith, one hope*, Eph. iv. 4. The doctrine from the whole is, *That Christ is the only hope of salvation to the people of God*, see 1 Cor. xv. 19. There are two things in the text. 1. That believers have a firm hope in this life. 2. That all the people of God were in the most miserable condition of any men, if the hopes were only determined to this life, see 1 Thess. i. 3. In which text we have two things. 1. All the hope of a christian centers in Jesus. 2. That what christians hope to enjoy by Christ, they ought with patience to wait for it. To these two texts, we may add, Acts xxviii. 20. Where Christ is called *the hope of Israel*, all God's *Israel* fix their hope on him.

I. The nature of *hope*.II. In what Christ is called our *hope*.III. When a person may conclude, that Christ is to him the *hope of salvation*.

I. For the nature of *hope*, it is a saving grace of God's spirit, wrought in a regenerate person, whereby he doth firmly and patiently expect the certain accomplishment of

all future good, which God hath promised, and faith believes. *It's a saving grace of God's spirit.* I call it a saving grace, to differ it from natural hope: we read of a hope that is like a spider's web, *that shall be cut off*, Job. viii. 14. that shall be, *as the giving up of the Ghost*, Job. xi. 20. and then I add of God's spirit, to shew the original of it. It is as all other graces are, the fruit of the spirit, *Wrought in a regenerate person.* This is its subject; no profane man, no hypocrite can shew this flower. The natural hope is found in wicked men, but saving hope abides only in the regenerate soul. *Whereby he doth firmly and patiently expect.* This shews the nature of this grace; expectation and waiting is the proper work of hope, Psl. lxii. 5. *My soul wait thou only on God, for my expectation is from him.* Nor is it a careless, but a very vehement intention of mind, in expecting and waiting, Isa. viii. 17. *I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face, and I will look for him.* The Apostle expresseth it, Rom. viii. 19. *The earnest expectation of the creature.* It signifies with a stretched out neck, as the condemned prisoner for an hoped pardon. And then the two properties of this expectation are with firmness and patience. *It expects firmly or certainly*, Heb. vi. 11. Hope is never without assurance, (saith *Mr. Pemble*) though not of the thing, yet persuasion; for the firmness and steadfastness of it, it's compared to an anchor, Heb. vi. 19. *It expects with patience*, 2 Thes. iii. 5. *patient waiting for Christ.* Faith is our logic, (saith *Luther*;) to conceive what we must believe; hope our rhetoric, to persuade us in tribulation unto patience. *The accomplishment of future good.* This shews its object; generally it is, that which is good, particularly, future good; the object of faith is evil things as well as good, it believes the threatenings as well as the promises, but hope looks only at good things, and at future good, *Hope that is seen is not hope*, Rom. viii. 24. Faith looks at things past, present, and to come, and herein it differs from vision. *Which God hath promised*, Tit. i. 2. Hope would be a wild fancy, and not a well-grounded hope, if not built upon some promise of God. *And faith believeth:* Faith goes before hope, and the steadfastness of hope is from the certainty of faith. Faith believes the truth of the thing, and hope waits for its accomplishment. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for*, Heb. xi. 1. Faith is the mother of hope, it discovers the treasure, and hope gathers it.

II. In what Christ is called our hope of salvation. 1: *He hath purchased for us a right to salvation.* Heaven is a purchased possession, Eph. i. 14. Jesus hath procured us a title to this possession; hath bought us for himself, and salvation for us; hath satisfied the justice of God for our sins, and hath purchased remission of sins for us, Rom. iii. 24. and Eph. i. 7. He hath blotted out the hand writing of ordinances against us, and nailed it to his cross; hath reconciled us to God, and God to us, 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.* Whatsoever is a procuring cause of salvation, is in and through Christ; by him we are justified, redeemed, and made heirs of eternal life; he may well be called our hope, because all the salvation we hope for, is by his procurement; he hath bought for us the inheritance, and made us joint purchasers with himself. 2. *It is he in whom all our salvation is kept.* God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, 1 Joh. v. 11. 'Tis in him as its procurer, and as the fountain and treasury in which it is kept. Our salvation is laid up in heaven, Col. i. 5. and laid up in Christ; heaven is its place, and Christ is its fountain and communicator, Mat. xxv. *Come ye blessed.* 3. *It is he that works in the hearts of believers, the actual hope of salvation.* He by his spirit works the grace of hope in the soul; he gives power to believe and hope, for we have no more natural power to hope for heaven, than to purchase it, Christ therefore gives us an eye to hope, as well as an hand to believe; and when this eye grows dim, he clears it by the anointing of his spirit, that we may hope unto the end, and blesseth all the means which himself hath appointed for the strengthening of hope.

III. When a person may conclude, that he hath a true ground of hope. All that have cause to affirm, that Christ is to them the hope of glory, must first prove, that Christ is in them. Paul could say, Gal. ii. 20. *Christ liveth in me.* he that cannot say so, cannot call Christ his hope; without Christ, and without hope, Eph. ii. 12. I shall hint seven reasons, why those without Christ, have no true ground of actual hope by Christ. *Hope of salvation is a fruit of regeneration,* 1 Pet. i. 3. We are without hope till begotten again. To be in Christ, and to be born again are equivalent expressions; regeneration is nothing else but the forming of Christ in the soul, Gal. iv. 19. and without Christ, there is no hope of glory; flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of

heaven. 2. *Hope of salvation is a consequent of effectual calling.* Hope and calling are put together, Eph. i. 18. When God begins savingly to call a soul, he lays a foundation of lively hope in the soul. Now those without Christ are uncalled; calling is nothing else but the revealing of Christ in us, Gal. i. 15, 16. Christ may be revealed to us before our calling, but not in us, and if uncalled, there is no hope of salvation. 3. *The true hope of salvation is a fruit of grace,* 2 Thes. ii. 16. Grace means both grace in God, and in us; saving hope is the fruit of God's grace, and a consequent of grace in the soul. God first works grace, and then hope; a graceless is an hopeless condition. Now they that are not in Christ, are not in a state of grace. Conversion and union with Christ is the same thing, and therefore without Christ, without hope. 4. *Saving hope is a fruit of justification,* Tit. iii. 7. Rom. v. 1, 2. There is no hope, till justified by God; now he without Christ is unjustified, and can have no true hope. To be in Christ and to be justified, are of the same import, and he without Christ's righteousness, is without hope. 5. *He that is not in Christ, and Christ in him, is an enemy to God.* We are reconciled to God by our interest in Christ, he is our peace, and by him we are brought near to God, Eph. ii. 13. Enmity with God, cannot possibly have hope of heaven; heaven is not for them that hate, but those that love God, 1 Cor. ii. 9. He without Christ loves not God, nor God him. 6. *Hope of salvation is built upon the divine promise.* The promises gives us an interest, and upon interest ariseth hope, Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 13, &c. Now there is no promise without Christ, *For all promises are in him,* 2 Cor. i. 20. and if we be destitute of the promises, we must be destitute of hope. 7. *He that is without Christ is in a state of damnation.* *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ,* Rom. viii. 1.. This implies there is nothing but condemnation to them that are out of Christ. Now a state of damnation, and a hope of salvation, are inconsistent, so that none can say, Christ is to them the hope of glory, till they can say, Christ is in them, and they in Christ. *The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness,* Rom. viii. 10. *The body is dead because of sin,* that is, the body of death hath not its former power, its force is much abated; sin is not so much desired as formerly, is better watched against, and more opposed, its commanding

power is not allowed to sway as it once did. *The spirit is life, because of righteousness*, that is, the spiritual part; called spirit, because the spirit is its author, this is life, because of righteousness, that is, it doth effectually move to acts of righteousness. Where Christ is the bias of the soul, it is carried on with as much vigour after holiness, as ever it was after sin. There is no holy action, nor way, but the heart loves it, and is desirous to close with it, and can heartily sorrow when it comes short of it. When Christ dwells in the soul, it is as much grieved for its coming short of holiness, as for its excesses in sin; he that can find it thus with him, may conclude Christ is in him the hope of glory.

For Information. 1. *It asserts the God-head of Christ.* we are forbidden to hope in creatures, be they ever so excellent, Jer. xvii. 5. *Cursed is man that trusteth in man.* To hope in a creature, is to depart from the Lord, but we are commanded both to believe and hope in Christ; *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*, Joh. xiv. 1. Rom. xv. 12. He is the chief object of our faith, and hope. 'Tis damnation to hope in a creature, and salvation to hope in Christ. Christ therefore is God, and not a mere creature. 2. *That the hope of a believer is a glorious hope; a blessed hope*, Tit. ii. 13. And we may as well call it a glorious hope, its glorious in its matter; they are all glorious things which the christian hopeth for; it's glorious in its manner of acting things not seen, and in its foundation, which is Christ himself, who is the God of glory, and the hope of Israel. 3. *That all not interested in Christ, are in an hopeless condition.* They may have hope that God will bring them into a state of salvation, but actual hope they are strangers to at present. *O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble*, Jer. xiv. 8. Christ is our hope before he is our Saviour, but he is neither actually our Saviour, nor our hope, till by faith we are united to him, Eph. ii. 12. When Christ gives himself actually to us, then only is he in our hearts the actual hope of salvation. 4. *It shews the vanity of those that build their hope of salvation upon any other bottom.* There are many foundations, upon which men set their hope of eternal life, which will fail them in the day of trial. *Some build upon prosperity*; this is the worldlings hope. *Job purged himself from this idolatry, he never made gold his hope, Nor said to the wedge of gold, thou art my confidence*, c. xxxi. 24.

And yet there are thousands that have no other foundation. What a vain hope it is to rely on such lying vanities, will appear if we consider, *The worst of men do and may enjoy abundance of outward things.* Job. xxi. 7, to 14. shews that there may be such worldly prosperity, yet no cause to hope for salvation. All these things may consist with the hatred of God. *The best of Saints often want even a competency of these things,* see Heb. xi. 37. The holy Apostles had the full assurance of hope, and yet but poor estates in the world. Job when he had lost his wealth, lost not his hope of salvation, see c. xix. *Others build their hope of salvation upon their civil righteousness.* This is the moral man's hope. he lives soberly and honestly amongst men; none can charge him with any gross sins, this is the rock of his confidence. It's a mercy to be civilized; it were happy if all that profess religion, did live according to these principles of philosophy, he that is not unblemished in his carriage this way, can have no hope of heaven, Tit. ii. 11, &c. yet may this be where there is no true hope of salvation. The Pharisee in the gospel was untainted in all this, Luk. xviii. 11. yet was void of all true hope. *The five virgins,* Mat. xxv. 1, 2. they were virgins, not strumpets, they were professing virgins, for they had lamps, and did in some sort wait for the bridegroom, yet had none of them any good hopes, the door of heaven was shut against them. *The man without the wedding garment,* Mat. xxii. 12. was no scandalous man, he was not suspected by any of the guests, and yet because he was not covered with the righteousness of Christ, he was cast out into utter darkness. *The young man,* Mat. xix. 18, &c. was no scandalous person, he had many common graces, which rendered him lovely to Christ, Mar. x. 21. and yet was destitute of true hope. *The Scribes and Pharisees* were no scandalous livers, see Phil. iii. 5, 6. no man could lay any thing to their charge of riot or prodigality, and yet they had no true hope of life, see Mat. v. 20. *Except your righteousness exceeds theirs, ye shall never enter into heaven.* That separation which shall be made at the last day, is not only between the scandalous and the godly, but between the civil and the godly, Mat. xxv. 32. not between sheep and wolves, but sheep and goats, who feed, herd, and fold together; yet have the goats no more hope of salvation, than the wolves; in a word, God needed not to have given his Son, if civil righteousness had been sufficient for hope of eternal

life. Those that never heard of Christ, have by the light of nature walked as exactly in common honesty, as most christians, yea have far outstript many. 3. *Others build their hope upon the merits of their own works.* This is the papist's hope; though they place some hope in Christ, yet they also confide in the merit of their own good works, this is as deceitful a foundation as any; we grant, that the good works of sanctification are very lovely, and are necessary to salvation, they are evidences of our faith, *Show me thy faith by thy works*, Jam. ii. 17. 26. Faith if it have not works is dead, 'tis as the body without the spirit. Faith justifies our person before God, and good works justifies before men, yet are not works any true foundation to hope for salvation. *Good works are not meritorious of eternal life.* Their merit is a proud opinion of ourselves. Three things are required to make a work meritorious, none of which are in our works. *It must be our own.* Our good works are our own subjectively, because they are wrought in us, and beneficially, but in their original, they are none of ours; we did not plant, water, nor preserve them; they are wells which we dug not, and vineyards we planted not, they are *the fruits of the spirit*, a divine creation; we are his workmanship, Eph. ii. 10 and Isa. xxvi. 12. It is God that hath wrought all our works in us. *That which meriteth must be complete and perfect.* an imperfect work cannot be meritorious, and our best works are imperfect; there are more threads of copper than of gold, in the best web we can weave. *Our very righteousness, is a filthy rag*, Isa. lxiv. 6. Our best sacrifice is lame and blind, our holiest works need pardon at the hand of God, Neh. xiii. 22. Christ makes intercession for the very sins that cleave to our holy offerings. Our gold is full of dross, our wine is mixed with water. *That which merits, must not be due upon any other account.* Paying debts is not meritorious, nothing that we do but is a debt to God, the parable, Luk. xvii. 10. The best servant God ever had, is but an unprofitable one; if we could do all commanded us, we did no more than by duty we owe to God. *The acceptance of the best works is through Christ.* 'Tis by virtue of union with Christ, that we are enabled to do works, and by such union they are accepted of God. Out of Christ the best works are but abominations; *He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man*, Isa. lxvi. 3. No works can please God, unless done by Christ's strength, and in Christ's

name, and their doer be interested in Christ; he hath made us *accepted in the beloved*, Eph. i. 6. 4. *Others build their hopes upon their good meanings.* Though they fail of what God requires, yet their intentions are right, and they hope they shall be saved, but this is no true ground of hope. *God requires not only good intentions, but good actions.* What ever a man intends, if his actions be not regular, God abhors him, and his intentions. *Saul* had a good intention in sparing the best of the cattle of the *Amalekites* for sacrifice, yet *Samuel* chargeth him with rebellion, 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23. *Uzza* had a good intention in staying the ark of God, yet how was God offended with him for his error, 1 Sam. xiii. 9, 10. If a man's action be bad, his intentions are bad also, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 5. *The certainty of a believer's salvation,* his hopes shall never make him ashamed, because they are built on Christ. 6. *That a believer may well make Christ his hope, in all his duties,* His hope for assistance in performing them, and for their acceptance, and for success in their use; he that is our hope, may well be relied upon for all duties that help us on to salvation; when we come to pray, or to hear, he will be to us what we hope for in them. Our hopes in Christ are more than our fears from Satan, or from ourselves.

For Exhortation. 1. *It commends sundry necessary duties to the people of God.* You that believe that your hope of salvation is built on Christ, learn these lessons. *Do not despair of salvation.* The Devil turns every stone, to drive believers to despair of heaven. It would be enough to preserve them from this snare, if I should only shew that despair is a very sinful thing, and a cause of others sins, it is a sin against the first commandment, in which hope and faith are required, and distrust and despair are forbidden, It is well observed by divines, that *Cain's* despair, was a greater sin than his murder, and that *Judas'* despair was a greater sin than his betraying of Christ. Despair is the mother of many great sins, it occasions hatred of God, hardens the heart against the counsels of God and man, increaseth impenitency and obstinacy of heart, and often occasions self-murder. It was this sin that caused *Saul* to fall upon his own sword, and *Judas* to be his own executioner, it sets the door wide open to the worst of sins, and therefore the godly should abhor it. The text makes full provision against this

sin to all believers. If hope of life eternal were in ourselves or any creature, then despair could not be avoided, but our hope being in Christ, 'tis absurd to despair in thought. There are three things, whereby the Devil endeavours to hurry souls to despair. *The severity of God's justice.* Satan saith, God will by no means acquit the guilty; when he would drive a soul to presumption, he hides the justice of God, and represents him as all mercy; when he would draw a soul to despair, then he fills the soul with thoughts of nothing but strict justice. The text relieves the soul from afflicting thoughts of divine justice: he on whom our hope is staid, hath satisfied justice to the uttermost, *He is the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. He hath furnished us with a righteousness, which the justice of God cannot except against, yea he hath made divine justice a friend to us in salvation, hence 1 Joh. i. 9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us.* God remits sin to his believing people, not only as a faithful, but a righteous God. *The greatness of sin committed.* Satan is very busy to allure men to sin, and then he labors by the greatness of sin, to bring them to despair; he draws us into sin, and then accuses us to God; he extenuates sin when he tempts, but when his temptations have fastened, then he aggravates it, saith he, dost thou think that sins so often repeated, so long continued in, and committed against so much light, shall be pardoned? The text relieves us against the greatness of sin; the merit of Christ is infinite, 1 Joh. i. 7. *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from sin.* We have the same reason through him to hope for the pardon of the greatest as of the least sin, great and small sins are all one to infinite merit, and infinite mercy. *The fear of perseverance.* Satan labours to put believers in fear, that they shall not hold out in faith and obedience, but fall short of salvation. This text removes this doubt, for Christ on whom the hopes of salvation are builded, hath undertaken to carry the soul on to the end, he made intercession on earth for *Peter*, and still makes intercession in heaven for all believers, that their faith should not fail, Luk. xxii. 32. When he left the world, he did solemnly commend the keeping of those for whom he died, to God, intreating him, by that dear love he bare to him, that he would keep them unto the end, Joh. xvii. 11. and God hath undertaken this care, 1 Pet. i. 5. *We are kept by the power*

of God through faith unto salvation, this is a sufficient and perpetual keeping, see an express promise, 1 Cor. i. 8. *He shall confirm you unto the end, that you may be blameless in the day of the Lord Jesus.* And for this it is, that Christ doth by his spirit, communicate continual supplies of grace to his people, to carry them on from strength to strength, till they come to glory. *Nourish this grace of hope.* 'Tis the believer's duty to maintain lively and strong hopes of salvation. As we must keep faith in a continual acting, so also hope, 1 Pet. i. 13. *Be sober, and hope unto the end. Labor for full assurance of hope,* Heb. vi. 11. 'Tis an undervaluing of salvation, not to strengthen its hope in the soul. Let me use a few motives to persuade the nourishing of this grace of hope, and shew some helps for the strengthening of it..

For motives. 1. *The hope of salvation is an helmet to the soul,* 1 Thes. v. 8. Faith and love are the breast plate, and hope is the golden helmet; this is of great use to the soldier, the sword cannot wound him, the pistol cannot hurt him, if he have an helmet of proof upon his head, but if this be broken, the head is exposed to danger. If a christian suffer this hope to decay, he lays himself open to a thousand hazards. 2. *It is the anchor of the soul,* Heb. vi. 9. The condition of believers is very like a ship on a tempestuous sea, hope is the anchor, which being fixed in firm ground preserves the soul, though not from tossing, yet from driving either upon rocks or sands. Hope is the sheet anchor, which keeps the soul from wreck. The mariners will above all things keep the anchor to save both goods and life. The soul will ride out the most violent storm when this anchor is fixed. 3. *It is the candle of the soul.* The people of God are often compassed about with darkness. Inward and outward darkness beset them round, they often walk in it, hope gives them light in this darkness, *Thou Lord light my candle,* Ps. xviii. 28. While the candle of hope burns, the soul will have some light, hence Isa. i. 10. *Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God* What is this staying, but the exercising of hope? While the hope of salvation continues, the soul hath some beams of light. 4. *Hope of salvation is the soul's comforter in all its dejections,* it settles the soul in all its disjointings; it's

a bladder which keeps the soul above water. All heart-disquietings arise either from want, or weakness of hope; *Why art thou cast down O my soul? hope in God*, Ps. xlii. 3, 11. The stronger the hope, the weaker the disquietment; hope is like the ark to *Noah*, or as the whale to *Jonah*; it is called a door, Hos. ii. 15. It will open an outlet to escape danger, and be an inlet of comfort in the greatest danger. While a soul can keep this door open, it will not sink under the sorest burthens. 5. *The hope of salvation is the soul's encourager in all duties.* The soul is very apt to tire in duties, because it doth not always find the present income it expects; this hope makes the soul active in its duties, Heb. vi. 11, 12. It lets the soul see that the less it receives now, the more it shall receive hereafter. 6. *The hope of salvation helps the soul to be crucified to the world, and the world to it.* The stronger hopes of heaven a christian hath, the more weary he is of the world, and the more desirous to be in heaven. Hope, makes a christian conclude a little of the world to be enough, and a great deal of heaven to be but a little, it puts the soul into an heavenly frame, ere it comes to heaven, Phil. iii. 20. *Looking for a Saviour* is the acting of hope; this raised up their hearts to a heavenly conversation; he that lets hope die in in his heart, will find the world too lively; keep up hope, and you will easily keep down the world. 7. *The hope of salvation will keep on the purifying of the soul*, 1 Joh. iii. 4. 'Tis both an evidence, and a fruit of hope. Hope of glorification is ever a great promoter of sanctification.

The helps to attain a strong hope are divers. *Study the promise and oath of God.* This is that which begets and strengthens hope; it makes hope live, and become lively, Heb. vi. 17, 18. *Strengthen faith.* The more active faith is in applying, the more serious will hope be in waiting; hope is the flame of faith, the more fuel the greater flame. *Look often within the veil*, Heb. vi. 19. 'Tis that on which the anchor of hope is fastened. Christ's death, resurrection, ascension, and especially his intercession within the veil, doth encourage both faith and hope. *Be sure to remember the experiences of the manifestation of God's love to you.* These are the glimpses of heaven, and they will confirm the soul's hope of heaven. *Experience begets Hope*, Rom. v. 4. *Strengthen your love to God.* The stronger a christian's love to God is, the firmer will his hope

of heaven be. *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life, Jude xxi.* Love to God in the heart, opens the eye of hope; as love decays, so doth hope. *Act all your hope for salvation on Christ alone.* Make him the bottom and basis of all your hope. There are divers things in Christ, at which the soul must look, that it may expect salvation by him, 1. *At the death of Christ.* 'Tis Christ crucified, that is the ground of our hope; by his death he purchased salvation, and therefore our hope of it must look at his death. A christian's hope is laid in the blood of Christ, see Rom. iii. 25. Now our hope and faith have the same foundation. 2. *At the resurrection of Christ,* 1 Pet. i. 3. Though Christ did by his death merit our salvation, yet it is his resurrection that gives us a ground of hoping, and therefore he is said to be risen again for our justification, Rom. iv. ult. If he had not risen, his death had done us no good, his breaking through death is the perfection of the work; the Jews, yea, Pagans believe his death, Christians his resurrection also, and thereupon hope in his death. *We trusted it had been he that should have delivered Israel,* Luk. xxiv. 21. It was Christ's resurrection that gave the church a ground to hope in his death; his death shewed his humanity, his resurrection his divinity, Rom. i. 4. 3. *At his intercession,* see Heb. vii. 25. By this he applies to his elect all that he hath purchased for them. A christian's hope should bottom itself upon these three pillars, and it will stand as the strongest mountain. *It teacheth the wicked the true way to get a right hope of salvation.* Christ by faith must be apprehended, before there be any true foundation of hope; all other hopes will be like the spider's web. I know the question will be, how shall we get an interest in Christ? 1. *Disinterest thyself in sin.* Disunion with sin, is one step to union with Christ; drive sin out, and Christ will come in. 2. *Beg of him that he would take possession of thy heart,* say to him, *Come in you blessed of the Lord;* get up thy heart to a willingness to be his. 3. *Wait on him in those ways wherein he useth to bestow himself.* 4. *Accept Christ when he calls.* Few or none that live under the gospel, but Christ proffers himself by more than ordinary stirrings, embrace those offers, and Christ is thine.

SERMON XL. ISA 32.—2.

“ Rivers of waters in a dry place.”

THIS chapter contains a prophetic description of Christ, and his kingdom. Some expositors refer it to *Hezekiah*, and his kingdom; *Ahaz*, his father and predecessor, who walked after the lusts of his own heart, had put all things out of order, had overturned the state both of religion, and civil polity in the kingdom, therefore doth God by *Isaiah*, promise another and a better King, *Hezekiah* by name, who should by his justice and piety, set all things right; but in the mystery all refer it to Christ, and his kingdom, of which *Hezekiah* was a type. What Christ should be to his people, this verse shews by divers resemblances; *He shall be a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and as rivers of waters in a dry place.* Of this last I am now to speak, where is, a description of the natural heart, *A dry place.* A description of Christ; what he is to man, *He is rivers of waters.*

I. That man is in himself a dry place.

II. That Christ is to men that are dry, as rivers of waters.

I. *That man is in himself a dry place.* The heart of man is till watered by grace, like a dry parched wilderness, as dry as the heath that was never rained upon. This is clear from the next verses, where a larger description is made of the same condition of man under other similitudes; *The eyes of them that see shall not be dim, &c.* Christ shall restore a tongue to speak, a mind to understand, ears to hear, to such as before were dead, and dull, and stricken with benumbedness of heart. The best of men without Christ are but dry places, empty pits in which are no water, Isa. xlv. 3. *I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground.* There are two sorts of dry ground, some see their dryness, and thirst after the moisture of grace; some take no notice of their want of moisture; but all in themselves are but dry places, Isa. xxxv. 6, 7. *He is desert, a wilderness, parched ground;* but by grace, he is a pool, a land of streams, and springs of water.

1. I shall shew what resemblance there is between the heart of man, and a dry land. 1. *Dry places are hard.* Long droughts make soft places hard. Wildernesses and deserts, are places that have no softness in them. The heart of man in itself is very hard, and is often compared to the hardest of stones, *Zech. vii. 12.* The nether milstone is not so hard as the natural heart of man; mercies cannot soften it, judgments make no impression upon it, ordinances cannot break it, and till the spirit of God fall upon it, it will not be softened. The heart of stone can by no art of creatures, be turned into an heart of flesh, it feels and fears nothing, it resists against every thing which is used to do it good, till the irresistible grace of God take it in hand. We have an instance of it in *Pharaoh*, all the hammers God used, were not able to molify his flinty soul. 2. *Dry places are barren.* There is no fruit seen, nor expected, in desert and parched wildernesses; there are briars and thorns, weeds and nettles in abundance, but no pleasant fruit. The heart of man, while disunited from Jesus, brings forth wild grapes plentifully, vain thoughts, sinful actions, ungodly words, but no pleasant fruit; their *vine is the vine of Sodom, and their clusters the clusters of Gomorrah*, *Deut. xxxii. 32.* 'Tis not the wild tree, but the tree transplanted that bears fruit. God tells *Ephraim*, *Hos. xiv. 8.* *In me is thy fruit found.* Good works are the *Fruits of the spirit*, *Gal. v. 22.* The spirit plants them, waters them, ripens them, and brings them to perfection. To seek for good fruit in a dry heart, is to seek the living among the dead, to seek for grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles. 3. *Dry places are places of hurtful creatures.* Lions, bears, and other ravenous creatures, range and lodge in desert places, they are *Habitations of dragons*, *Isa. xxxv. 7.* The natural heart is a place of devils and lusts; that old serpent, that red dragon, the Devil, hath his residence there; pride, ignorance, worldliness, profaneness, atheism, and all kinds of lusts rage and rule there. Christ cast seven Devils out of *Mary Magdalen*, Sins and devils keep a constant abode in these desolate wildernesses. *The Prince of the power of the air worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience*, *Eph. ii. 2.* The natural heart is a hell of Devils, and of filthy lusts; the Devils delight in dry places, *Mat. xii. 43.* That which God threatens against *Babylon*, is made true of the natural heart, *Isa. xlii. 21, 22.* Creatures and lusts, which are far worse.

than these wild beasts, lie down and fold together in the unrenewed heart.

II. How the heart of man comes to be so dry. 1. *The first sin of Adam is the principle cause.* The heart of man in his first creation was well watered; there was a spring of holiness in it, which did flow through every channel. It's said of paradise, Gen. ii. 10. *That a river went out of Eden to water the garden.* The soul of man was as well watered, as that garden was; grace and holiness did run in pleasant streams through every faculty of it. The sin of Adam dried up these springs, and by this means is the heart ever since dry. 2. *Every sinner increaseth this dryness in himself, and that By committing new sins against God.* Every sin parches the heart, and makes it more dry than it was before. *By shutting out those streams of grace, which God would cause to run through the soul.* God would pour water upon the dry heart, man is not willing; he is called to the waters, Isa. lv. 1. but will not come, and because he will not come to the waters, his heart remains dry.

I. For Information. 1. *How unprofitable the heart of man is by nature; Once unprofitable, but now profitable to me and thee, Philem. i. 1.* When the heart is renewed, then it's profitable, but while unconverted it's an unuseful piece. No corner of the barren wilderness is more useless than the unrenewed heart of man. 2. *This shews the reason why the spiritual husbandry doth so little good in the world.* The ministers of the gospel plough, sow, and dig till they sweat again, and yet little good is done in most men with whom they labor. Isa. xlix. 4. *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for naught.* One reason is, the greatest part of the earth, which they take pains about, is without moisture, see Mat. xiii. 5. Ministers plough the rocks, they sow their seed in the wilderness, the labor they take is laid out in dry places; while the heart is unmoistened, the greatest diligence will be lost, the best seed will be sown in vain. The tree that is without sap, will never bear, what pains soever is taken with it. Man is in himself without the sap of grace, and that's the cause of all his barrenness. 3. *The power of converting grace;* this makes the dead heart live, it turns the dry heart into a fountain of living waters. Psl. cxiv. 8. *He turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.* God doth greater

work than this, in converting a sinner, he turns the heart that is harder than flint into streams of living water. Isa. xxxv. 6, 7. *In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.* God dries up a sea of corruption, and creates a sea of waters in the soul. 4. *It shows why there are so few penitential tears shed by unconverted men.* Such as are renewed can mourn, but the unrenewed heart is a stranger to this work, it mourns truly neither for sin nor misery. it can hear sin confessed, and its condition bewailed, and yet its eyes are dry; the reason is, it is a dry piece of earth, it wants the moisture of penitential grace; he that seeks for spiritual tears in such eyes, seeks for a fountain in the wilderness. Till God moistens the dry heart, no drops can be expected from the eyes. *I will pour upon the house of David, the spirit of grace, and they shall mourn &c.* Zech. xii 10.

II. For Exhortation. 1. *To persuade such as are in a state of nature to believe this.* Whatever thoughts they have of themselves, they are but a dry parched wilderness in the account of God. Such dry places have neither pleasure nor profit in them; no man much values them, men will neither build houses, nor plant vineyards, nor sow their seed in them, and the Lord as much abhors a dry parched heart, as the husbandman a dry rocky ground, especially if it thirst not after spiritual watering. Men that have dry land, spare no cost, nor pains to bring rivulets through it, that it may be moistened. It will, they know, in a little time, recompence all their labor. Oh! that men would be as careful that their dry hearts may be well watered. There are two streams to water the dry heart; the stream of Christ's blood and of sanctifying grace. But how shall I get these streams brought through my soul. *You must beg of God to turn their course this way.* Men may cut places for rivers to run in, but none but God can cut a channel, to bring these spiritual streams into the soul, Psl. civ. 10. 'Tis a secret mystery, how those springs are maintained, so as to run without ceasing in great streams; philosophy cannot shew the reason of it, the Psalmist doth; *God sends them into the valleys,* his providence keeps them continually running; he that would have his soul watered, must go to God by prayer. *You must make use of the pipes through which these streams are sent.* The ordinances of God are golden pipes: *I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the*

dry ground, Isa. xlv. 3. The vessel by which this spirit pours this water is some ordinance. All the spiritual waters in *Ezekiel's* vision, issued from under the threshold of the sanctuary, Ezek. xlvii. 1. He that would have his soul watered, must come as near as he can to God's sanctuary, and then his soul shall be abundantly watered; all the wells of salvation are in the church, and the buckets of the sanctuary, the ordinances of God, must be used by those that will be watered out of them. 2. *Let such as are delivered from this dry estate learn their duty.* Hath God made your fleece moist, which before was dry? It is your duty to be humbled for your former dryness. Men cannot bewail truly their bad condition, till they be brought out of it, and therefore they ought to do it after. How long did your hearts continue as parched clods of earth; moisten your hearts and your eyes with sorrow, because of your former want of moistness; *We ourselves, were sometimes foolish*, Tit. iii. 3. *To answer God's end, and to recompense his cost in bringing the streams of his grace through your souls.* Be fruitful as ground that is so richly watered, and the rather, because of the long time of your unfruitfulness. Those trees that grew by the bank of the river of the sanctuary, brought forth fruit every month, Ezek. xlvii. 12. and that tree, set by the streams of water, Psl. i. 3. *Brings forth his fruit in season, because filled with the fruits of righteousness.* Do what lies in you to help the bringing of these waters through hearts that are still dry. Let them by your freshness be made out of love with their own dryness, acquaint them how God watered your souls, and by your counsel and prayers, let some drops fall on them, Prov. xi. 25. God will give you a bucket for every drop you let fall on others.

Doct. II. *That Christ is to his people as rivers of waters in a dry place.* The prophet speaking of Christ, and of his benefit, says Isa. xxxv. 6. *Waters shall break out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert*, and c. lv. 1. he exhorts men to make use of Christ, and gospel-grace, *Ho! every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters.* Here I shall shew.

- I. The resemblance between Christ and waters.
- II. Why he is compared to rivers of waters.
- III. How much better Christ is than all other rivers of water.

1. What resemblance between Christ and waters. 1. *Water is cleansing*, it is the bath of nature, which God hath appointed for the cleansing of creatures from all defilements. The world would be a polluted place, if God had not created water. Jesus hath a cleansing virtue, his word is a purifying word, Joh. xv. 3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. *His blood is cleansing*, It is by its sprinklings that the filthy conscience is purged from dead works, to serve the living God, Heb. ix. 14. All the legal purifications were types of the great purifying fountain. The water of separation which God commanded for the purifying of the unclean, was a clear type of the spiritual purification which sinners have by the blood of Christ, see Numb. xix. The heifer did by her sex, denote the mean condition which Christ should live in upon earth, its redness did signify the bloody passion of Christ, its being without spot and blemish set forth the purity of Christ's nature, and the perfections of his righteousness and sufferings, and the circumstance, that the heifer must be such, as upon which never came yoke, did signify the voluntariness of Christ's sufferings, he could not be compelled to do it, but did it freely. That Christ and his blood was typified by this water, is clear from the Apostle, Heb. ix. 13, 14. Neither men nor angels can find any other way of cleansing sinners, than by the blood of Christ, his spirit is purifying, he cleanseth by applying Christ's blood and by creating clean dispositions in the soul. All the graces of the spirit are cleansing things. 2. *Water is cooling*. The parched land by streams or showers is refreshed and cooled. The sweating traveller cools himself by water; when the sun by its scorching beams hath made the room hot, wash it with water, and it's brought to a cool temper: Christ hath a cooling virtue; as he heats the soul that's cold and lifeless, by pouring grace into it, so he cools the soul of all dis-tempered heats. There are two violent heats, which even good men are liable to; sometimes with temptation. Satan by his firey arrows, puts a believer in a violent heat, as the hart is by the hunter put in a foaming sweat. When the soul is in this heat, Christ cools it, partly by opposing comfortable promises of deliverance, partly by giving in supplies of Christ, and partly by assuring him of supply, *My grace is sufficient for thee*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. God hath been pleased for very good reasons, to suffer sin to dwell in the

hearts of his children, and it shall while they abide in the flesh; this often by its fearful raging, puts a believer into a flame. Passion, pride, worldliness, and other corruptions, by their strong movings heat the heart, but when in this hellish heat, Jesus cools it, partly by subduing the mutinous lustings of the flesh, and partly by strengthening the renewed part, to take these mutineers captive. When *Saul* was in a raging heat to shed the blood of saints, Jesus appears to him in the way, and allays that furious heat, Acts ix. Believers after conversion, find as unholy heats in theirs as he had, but by the working of Christ's spirit, they are quenched. What a heat was *David* in, when going to *Nabals* house, 1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22. and yet God by the wisdom of *Abigail* brings him to himself, v. 32, 33. The best of Saints are transported by some corruption or other; when they are so, Jesus sprinkles some heavenly water upon them, and cools those destroying heats. 3. *Waters are suppling.* Steep hard things in water, and they are mollified. *The earth is made soft with showers*, Psl. lv. 10. Jesus hath a mollifying virtue, his blood, spirit and grace, do intenerate hearts as hard as the nether milstone. The scripture often speaks of the hardness of man's heart by nature, *It's represented by the hardest stones*, Eze. xxxvi. 26. Stones are condensed earth, the heart is naturally as cold as earth, and as hard as stones, it's compared to flint stone, Eze. iii. 7, 9. God made the prophet as a flint, to deal with them, whose hearts were harder than flint; to a rock, Jer. v. 3.; to the nether milstone: what is said of the *Leviathan*, Job. xli. 24. is much more true of the natural heart; to the adamant, which is the hardest of all stones, Zech. vii. 12. It's represented by the hardest metals, as iron and brass, Jer. vi. 28. and Isa. xlviii. 4. *I know that thou art an iron sinew, thy neck is iron, and thy brow brass.* Those words import two great evils in the impenitent heart; obstinacy and impudency, and yet this hard heart is made tender by the blood of Christ. They say of the adamant, that no hammers can break it, no force of man can bruise it, but put it into the blood of a goat, and it's dissolved; the blood of Jesus dissolves the flintiest adamant heart, see Acts ii. 37. This blood is the only cure for hardness of heart; could we speak with the blessed saints in heaven, they would tell us, it was this that turned their stony hearts into hearts of flesh. 4. *Waters are fructifying.* Barren lands are made fruitful

by streams of water; the watered garden is the fruitful one, Isa. lviii. 11. Those pastures are most fertile that lie nearest rivers; the tree that brings forth fruit, is *planted by the rivers of water*, Psl. i. 3. Christ is fructifying, by his spirit, blood and influences, the soul is made fruitful; all the fruits of righteousness are said to be by Jesus Christ, Phil. i. 11. 'tis he that plants these fruits, preserves them, ripens and brings them to perfection. The soul's implantation into Christ, is the cause of its fruitfulness, Joh. xv. 4. The branch is fed from the root, and the soul is made fruitful by the communication of Christ's spirit. *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits*, Cant. iv. ult. When Christ's blood flows through the soul, then it buds, blossoms, and brings forth fruit. 5. *Waters are healing*; some are very healing, all help on healing; some great wounds have been healed only by washing in water, the pool *Bethesda*, had such a sanative virtue, that it cured all manner of diseases, Joh. v. 2, 3, 4. In our own land, there are waters prescribed as a remedy for many distempers, and have proved succesful to many. Christ hath a healing virtue, he came into the world as a physician both for bodies and souls; his blood, spirit and word, have all healing virtues. *By his stripes we are healed*, Isa. liii. 5. he heals us of the guilt of sin by the imputation of his righteousness, and of its filthiness, by the imparting of his grace. Jesus hath a medicine for every disease, Rev. iii. 18. No sinner ever took down one draught of these waters, but was cured of whatever disease he had. 6. *Waters are a defence*, especially rivers, places surrounded with water, are places of safety, better than a wall of brass. Christ is very useful for defence, he is a safeguard from all the attempts of men and devils. Rivers of waters are drawn about the walls of the church, and keep it so secure, *That the gates of hell shall never prevail against it*, Isa. xxxiii. 21. and Rev. xiv. 1. Jesus stands in the midst of his church keeping guard in it, that none approach to hurt it, if his eye be taken off the church, a thousand breaches would soon be made in it; but being compassed by these waters, it cannot finally be annoyed.

II. Why is Christ compared to rivers of waters? 1. *To shew the abundance of all good in Christ*. Christ is not a vessel, nor a cistern, but a river of water; not a single river

but rivers. *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. i. 19. he is not only full, but bath fulness, yea not one kind, but all fulness, and this not only in him, but dwelling in him; he was *Full of grace and truth*, Joh. i. 14. There is the fulness of the vessel, so the saints are full, and the fulness of the fountain, so Christ is full. There is in saints a fulness of sufficiency, but in Christ of redundancy; we are full of guilt, Christ of merit; we of sin, Christ of grace; we of wants. Christ of riches to supply all our wants, *The spirit was not given to him by measure*, Joh. iii. 34. *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. There is a double reason why this fulness should be in Christ. *In his union with the word*. It is fit that he so nearly united to the influential cause, should partake abundantly of the influence; Joh. i. 14. The nearer the fountain, the more abundantly it partakes of the fountain, but his human nature was not only near, but made one personally with the fountain, and therefore must of necessity be infinitely full. *In the end of his fulness*. He was filled as a treasury, to fill others. There were millions of empty souls to be filled out of Christ, he was the head, and root of the church, therefore it was necessary that he should have all fulness dwelling in him. *To every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, Eph. iv. 7. He was to make many rich, hence it was necessary that he should be rich, Joh. i. 14, 16. *He was full of grace and truth, and of his fulness have we received, and grace for grace*. Those coffers that were to supply the necessities of so many impoverished souls had need be full. 2. *To shew the willingness of Christ to communicate*. If you would have water out of the bottle, you must unstop it, or else you shall want; if out of the cistern, you must turn the cock, and give it passage; if out of the pool or well, you must draw it up, but the river freely sends out its streams without labor, it runs day and night freely. Jesus, as he hath fulness of grace, so he is continually communicative of grace, Prov. ix. 1, 2, 3. This eternal wisdom doth not tarry till sinners sue to him, but by his grace prevents them; the table is continually spread, the door stands always open, yea messengers are always running about to intreat men to come in, that their wants may be supplied, Joh. vii. 37. *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink*. Do but open your doors, and the river will flow in upon you,

also Isa. lv. 1. *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye the waters.* Rivers do not only afford supply when men come to them, but they follow men. Jesus not only meets the beggar, but follows him, with his alms in his hand, when he runs away from him. *Naaman's* readiness to answer the requests of *Gezahi*, appears in, that he lighted from his chariot to meet him, 2 Kings v. 21. Jesus not only lights out of his chariot to meet the soul, but drives after the soul when it's running away from him; he commanded us to be willing to communicate, and he shews us his own example. *I am found of them that sought not after me*, Isa. lxv. 1. Christ goes after the lost sheep until he find it; he knows men are ignorant, and know not their need of him, obstinate and refuse instruction, therefore he runs after the sinner. 3. *To shew the powerfulness of the communications of grace to the soul.* The river runs irresistibly, it cannot be driven back by the force of men. The grace of Christ is communicated irresistibly to the soul. *As a mother comforteth her children, so will I comfort you in Jerusalem, and ye shall be comforted*, Isa. lxiii. 13. it is sweet, efficacious, and determining. Rivers of waters will make their way, notwithstanding opposition; and the grace of Christ is so powerful, that all the force of men and devils, cannot turn back its streams. When the stream of converting grace did run out upon *Saul*, he could not withstand, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* No river runs with such a strong current as the streams of grace which flow from Christ. 4. *To shew the purity of all that good which is in Christ.* Pools of water may contract filthiness, and in time be unsavory, but running streams purge themselves. If any thing filthy should be cast into a river, it would soon purify itself; rivers keep sweet, they cannot be poisoned; and as Christ is rich and full of all perfections, so all good in him is pure, there's no soil in him, his righteousness and graces are pure, without spot or mixture. Grace even in the best of us is full of mixture; *Our very righteousness are as filthy rags*, lxiv. 6. 5. *To shew the constancy of the communications of Christ to the soul.* Rivers are in continual motion, and Jesus is continually watering his people with the influences of his grace some way or other, Joh. xix. 6. 6. *To shew the variety of good in Christ.* Two great rivers there are, one of blood to expiate, the other of grace to sanctify; we are always wanting one thing or other, and

therefore is Jesus always communicating accordingly, his influences are not only full, free, powerful and constant, but various according to our necessities.

III. How Christ excels all other rivers. 1. *All other rivers are fed by springs from other places*, but Christ hath his supply from himself. The divinity fill the humanity, and, therefore, he is called a fountain, as well as a river, Zech. xiii. 1. The church calls him both fountain and streams, Cant. iv. 15. All the streams that flow from him to us, are from himself; *All fulness dwells in him*, Col. i. 19. The saints have derivative fulness; *All my springs are in thee*, Psl. lxxxvii. 7. but all Christ's springs are in himself. 2. *Other rivers are decaying*, they do not always run with the same strength, nor depth, a few dry summers make an abatement, see Hos. xiii. 15. and Isa. xi. 15. We have seen the decaying condition both of pools and rivers in droughts; but the streams of this river never fade; it runs as deep, as broad, and as strong to this day as ever; the river of his grace, merit and blood overflows, and will while the church hath need of it. 3. *Other rivers may be blocked up, or diverted another way*. It's possible to turn their channels into quite another course, but these rivers can neither be obstructed nor diverted. 'Tis impossible for all the creatures to turn the streams of Christ's grace from their course. The Devil hath been labouring five thousand years to dam up, or divert these rivers, but hath not been able to prevail; they do and will run, while any saint hath need of watering. The church is compared to a *Spring of water, whose waters fail not*, Isa. lviii. 11. All evil spirits have been attempting to block up these rivers, yet are all their endeavours of no effect; they could neither drown the church, with the rivers of their temptations, nor starve it by drying up or diverting these streams of grace. We read, Rev. xii. 15, 16 of a flood of waters which the Serpent cast out of his mouth to carry away the church; Christ dried up this flood, but the Serpent could never dry up the flood of grace which flows from Jesus to refresh the church. 4. *Other rivers are but of small dimension*, a narrow breadth, and a small depth, a man may soon dive to their bottom, but these rivers are of great dimension, they have indeed neither banks nor bottom; the grace of Christ is infinite, without dimension, Eph. iii. 18, 19. Neither man, nor angel can sound the depth, nor measure

the breadth of these silver streams. God promises to be unto his church, *A place of broad rivers and streams*, Isa. xxxiii. 21. When he gave Jesus to the church, then he actually made good this promise. 5. *Other rivers have much soil in them.* As the purest gold hath some dross, so hath the purest river some mud; but these rivers are perfectly pure; the grace of Christ and the streams of his blood have not the least defilement. Rev. xxii. 1. *A pure river of water of life, clear as chrystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb,* never was any chrystal so pure, or transparent, as the streams of grace that flow out from Jesus. 6. *The water drawn out of other rivers will corrupt,* Though it may keep sweet in the streams, it grows useless and noisome in the vessel. But this water always keeps its virtue. It never looseth its taste, it is useful for cleansing, for healing, for comforting at last, as at first. Though there be the water of sin in the soul, which mingles itself with these waters; yet they keep their smell and savour. The ocean of sin in the Saints doth neither drown, nor corrupt that drop of the water of grace which Christ has put into them; Christ's drops sweeten and dry up our sea, but our sea doth neither dry up nor pollute his drops. 7. *Other rivers may be frozen up.* Though running streams do not freeze so soon as standing waters, yet there is a possibility that they may freeze, but these rivers never freeze; the bleakest winds, the sharpest air, the coldest seasons cannot congeal them; they run as freely in the cold winter, as in the heat of summer. If these rivers should be congealed but for one day, the whole church of God would give up the ghost. 8. *Other rivers are many times prejudicial.* When they break their banks, they hurt the fields and pastures; men and cattle have been drowned by other rivers, but these have no such effects, never was any drowned by these streams, they preserve the soul from being drowned in the sea of God's wrath, see Isa. xxx. ult. Hell is compared to brimstone, to denote its violence; and to a river of brimstone, to shew its extent. By washing and bathing in these rivers, we are kept out of that river; he that is not drenched in these streams, shall for ever be drowned in those. 9. *Other rivers must be kept in repair by men.* They will break their banks, or sand up themselves, and in time grow useless, if not kept in order; but these can never be put out of order. All that Christ requires from us, is to

make use of them, he keeps them in order, without our cost, or care.

I. Information. 1. *The necessity of Christ.* Christ is the *One thing needful*, Luk. x. 42. He is as necessary to the soul, as rivers of water; the hearts of men are generally dry, Christ is a river to moisten them; they are hard, he is a river to mollify them; they are naturally filthy, he is a river to cleanse them; your bodies, your fields, your pastures, have not more need of streams of water, than your souls have of Christ. 2. *How well may Jesus expect fruitfulness from his people.* The church is compared to a vineyard, Isa. v. init, from this he justly expected grapes; he hath done whatever can be desired to make his people fit for fruit, he hath planted it with the choicest slips, and watered it with the choicest streams, see Exek. xlvii. 12. The root of every christian is fed abundantly by these streams, if it be not fruitful it's a pity it should grow any longer. 3. *The excellency of the church above all other places.* It is God's *Eden*, all the world besides is a barren wilderness, but this church is a place of broad rivers. *Canaan* is described to be as a land well watered, Deut. viii. 7. As much as a country full of rivers, is better than a parched desert, so much is the church better than all other places. 4. *The excellency of the ordinances.* These are pipes, by which these streams are conveyed to the soul. The waters in *Ezekiel's* vision broke out from under the threshold of the sanctuary, and from thence were conveyed all over the holy land. These rivers break out in the church, and from thence are carried to every particular soul. Were there are no ordinances, there are none of these streams.

II. Consolation. 1. *Against all the distempers which saints find in their own hearts.* Their souls are like a desert, here are waters to moisten them; hardened, here are waters to make them soft; polluted, here are rivers to cleanse them; barren, here are streams to make them fruitful; here is fulness in Christ against their emptiness and unworthiness; they have a deep fountain of sin, here is a deeper fountain of grace; they have many streams of sin running in their hearts, here are more streams of grace; Christ's river can swallow up our rivers. If the soul be sick, here are rivers of medicinal waters; if faint, here are rivers

of cordial waters; if cold with fears, here are rivers to warm it; if heated with temptation, here are rivers to cool it. 2. *Against all their decays of grace.* Though they can never lose all their grace, yet they may by their carelessness, lose some degrees of it, see Rev. iii. 2. This is a comfort; here are rivers of water to fill our vessels again, though our cistern be even at the bottom, yet out of these rivers we may soon fill it up. Christ can recruit our losses without impairing himself. He hath enough to recover all such losses; though there was but a spoonful of oil in the widow's cruse, yet there was a sea in God to fill all her vessels, and all she could borrow of her neighbours, 2 Kings iv. 4, 5, 6. and one sermon, one sacrament, or one prayer, may fill up our emptied bottles to the very brim.

III. Exhortation. 1. *To persuade all men to make use of these rivers,* Isa. lv. 1. *Ho! every one that thirsteth come to the waters.* Enough may be said to persuade. *All need these rivers* Are not your hearts dry, hard, barren and polluted? they are very ignorant that see not their necessity, Rev. iii. 17. *There are no rivers but these that can supply you.* No other cleanser, healer nor comforter besides Christ, Rev. iii. 8. All others will pollute, not cleanse, will drown, not save, will harden, not soften the heart. *These rivers are large enough for all your conditions,* Phil. iv. 19. Here are rivers without bank, without bottom; all thy vessels may be filled out of these rivers, they will drown mountains of sins. *These rivers stands always open.* *Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely,* Rev. xxii. 17. No man is barred, but he that by pride and unbelief bars himself. Oh! that you would be persuaded to forsake your own cisterns, and come to these spiritual streams. 2. *To persuade believers to several duties.* *Bless the Lord that hath opened these rivers.* They deserve much from cities that convey streams of water to them; how much doth God deserve, that hath brought these rivers to us? especially if we find by the ordinances, they are conveyed to our hearts. Hence you had your cleansing, softness and fruitfulness. By these rivers we come to have trading with heaven; all intercourse between God and us, is by these; they are our Nile and our Thames. *Consider God's design in opening these rivers;* be clean, be fruitful, &c. It's a disparagement to these rivers, if we be unclean, and unfruitful after so long

using them. *Make use of them in all cases.* When you find hardness growing upon the heart, wash them in these waters &c. The river is kept running to be a continual supply for us. *When ye see rivers, think on Christ,* the mystical river. The river runs, though men murmur; so does Christ; the river keeps its course, though men be unthankful, so does Christ; the river denies no thirsty passenger, Christ denies no thirsty sinner. *When you plant yourselves in any place,* be sure to enquire whether these rivers run there. No wise man will build where no water is; no wise christian will plant where no ordinances are.

SERMON XLI. 1 COR .1—24.

“ Christ the power and wisdom of God.”

THIS text is a glorious representation of salvation by Christ crucified. *Paul* in the former verses, lays down the judgment of the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles about this doctrine; the Jews dreamed that the Messiah should have a pompous earthly kingdom, that he should redeem them from the power of the Romans, and therefore they stumbled at his low condition, especially at the ignominy of the cross. The Gentiles through philosophy, thought it an idle fancy, that life should be brought out of death. *The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom,* v. 22. The text opposes the judgment of the believing Jews and Gentiles, to that of those who did not believe, this is expressed in two words; to the offence which the Jews took at the cross, that it was a weak doctrine, he opposes this, *Christ the power of God.* To the offence which the Greeks took, that it was a foolish doctrine, he opposes this, *Christ the wisdom of God,* to answer both these at once, he affirms both together, *Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

I. The titles; the power and wisdom of God.

II. The person dignified with these titles,

I shall begin with the first, which I shall open in this doctrine. *That Christ is the power of God.*

I. *In respect of his divine nature*; he is not only the power of God, but the God of power, which appears divers ways.

1. *By the titles given to him*; called *the mighty God*, Isa. ix. 6. *a rock* for his strength, Isa. xxxii. 2. an *Unicorn*, Num. xxiii. 22. a *Lion*, Rev. v. 5. All titles that imply power are given to Christ, as he is God.

2. *By the power which he hath as God put into creatures*. Many creatures are very powerful, *Sampson* could kill lions, Judg. xiv. 6. when he was bound in strong cords, he brake them as flax burnt with fire, Judg. xv. 14. he slew a thousand men with the jaw bone of an ass, v. xv. he carried the gates of *Gaza* upon his shoulders to the top of a hill, c. xvi. 3. when he was bound with new ropes, he broke them off his arms like a thread, c. xvi. 12. and he pulled down the pillars of a great house after his strength was impaired, c. xvi. 30. the horse, Job. xxxix. 19. the elephant, Job xl. 15, 16, 17. the whale, Job xli. 22, 23, 24. have a mighty power in them; if we go higher and look upon the Angels, they are called principalities and powers for their great strength, Col. i. 16, now all these have received their power from Christ, as he is God.

3. *By the works which he hath wrought*. Mighty works argue power in him that made them. Christ is the author of mighty works; look but upon creation, this was the work of Christ as well of the Father, Joh. i. 3. and Col. i. 16. *By him were all things created, whether things in heaven, or things in earth, visible and invisible*, he calls himself *the beginning of the creation of God*, Rev. iii. 14. What a mighty work is creation, if we consider, *the vastness of the fabric*. What a multitude of stars, and each of an incredible bigness; how many trees and plants, what mountains and hills! what seas and rivers! If we did but know what a huge frame heaven and earth is, we should say, he that made it must needs be the mighty power of God.

The smallness of time. All was framed and set up in the space of six days, and could have been done in so many minutes had he pleased. *The way whereby all was made*. He had no helper, no instrument, but only the mighty word of his power, Psl. xxxiii. 6. He did all easily without toil, Isa. xl. 28. He that studies this work, will conclude, the mighty power of him that framed it, Rom. i. 20. *The eternal power of his God-head are seen by the things that are*

made. Look upon providence whereby all things made are supported. Scripture attributes this to Christ as God, Heb. i. 3. *He upholds all things by the word of his power.* The poets feign *Atlas* to carry the weight of the heavens upon his shoulders. Christ is the great *Atlas* who really bears upon his shoulders the hugh fabric of the world, which is an argument of mighty power, if we consider two things. *How many batteries are made against the creation.* Every sin committed in the world, would shake down the heavens into the dust, if this mighty power did not underprop it. Every oath, lie, blasphemy, and every sinful act brings as it were the pains of a travelling woman upon the creation, and would dissolve it, if this mighty power of God did not bear it up. *How perfectly it's kept in repair, notwithstanding all this violence.* There is not one beam broken, not one pillar faded, not one prop sunk, though sin hath been undermining it, for above five thousand years; what *David* observed in his time, is as true now, Psl. cxix. 91. *They continue this day according to thy ordinance;* *Isaiah* speaks of this as an argument of almighty power, c. xl. 26. The sea ebbs and flows still, and is still kept prisoner in its channel; the sun, moon and stars keep their beaten path. Seed time and harvest, winter and summer, day and night mutually succeed one another; there is not one hinge broken, not one pin slipt out of place. Christ as God is indeed the power of God. *Originally;* all the seeds of his power are in himself. *Essentially;* his power is not a quality, but his very essence. *Eternally;* therefore called, *the rock of ages*, Isa. xxvi. 4. *Perfectly;* without alteration, and without diminution.

II. *In respect of his office as mediator.* God hath by Christ put forth his almighty power to accomplish his great designs in reference to salvation. 1. *God hath by Christ satisfied his justice which was injured by the sin of man.* The law of God was violated by men. God would have his law satisfied, the way was by Jesus, he gave him to bear the curse which our sins had deserved, and so to satisfy the demand of the law, as to penalty and suffering, Gal. iii. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; he is the propitiation for our sins,* 1 Joh. ii. 2. and our ransom, 1 Tim. ii. 6. This was a great work to bear the wrath of God without sinking, all the

Angels of heaven could not have carried this burden without fainting, but Christ did it fully, *Surely he hath borne our sorrows, and carried our griefs*, Isa. liii. 4. . 2. *God hath by Christ brought in everlasting righteousness.* Satisfying for sin was not enough to bring the elect to heaven. The law commanding must be fulfilled, as well as the law condemning; his bearing of the penalty freed us from hell, but there must be righteousness found out and imputed to us that we might have heaven; this great work did God by Christ, making him our righteousness, as well as our ransom, Rom. viii. 3. 4. By his passive obedience he satisfied for our guilt, by his active obedience he hath wrought out a complete righteousness for us; he hath made unto us righteousness, as well as redemption, v. 30. hence he is called, *the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. We have not one rag to cover our nakedness, but what comes from him. 3. *God hath by Christ wrought reconciliation between himself and the elect.* Sin set God and man at odds; God did by Christ bring about the great work of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 19. and Col. i. 20, 21. God made Christ the mediator to transact this great work of peace-making. None but he who is the great power of God was able to undertake this work: 4. *God hath by Christ dissolved Satan's power over the elect.* The elect by sin were enslaved by the Devil; now God by Christ hath delivered them from his power, Col. ii. 15. *Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made an open shew, triumphing over them on the cross.* When Satan thought to have conquered Christ, he was conquered by him. Christ rode as a conqueror on the cross, and the Devils were chained to it. Hence is Christ said to destroy the works of the Devil, 1 Joh. iii. 8. Though some of Satan's works do still abide in the hearts of the elect, yet God by Jesus, keeps them from taking that hold they once had, and he will at last utterly abolish them. 5. *God doth by Christ abolish death, and overcome the world for his elect.* In Joh. xvi. 33. he tells his people, that he hath overcome the world. The world fights against the elect by its glory, and reproach; but Jesus hath overcome both, so that no snare of the world is able to prejudice them, and so he hath abolished death, Hos. xiii. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave.* This work God did by Christ; he by submitting to death, hath ransomed all his from death, that is, from its hurt and dominion; his resurrection hath given the church assurance of their resur-

rection. All the powerful works of grace which God hath done for the church, he hath done by Christ.

III. *In respect of his doctrine.* The doctrine of Christ crucified, is *the power of God to salvation*, Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 18. Heb. iv. 13. This appears by its effects. 1. *Hereby is the unconverted heart regenerated.* The work of conversion is a work of great power, it's the opening of blind eyes, raising of dead souls; consider *Man himself is unwilling* Mat. xxiii. 37. The will, the understanding, the affections, all stand with weapons in their hands to oppose the work. *The world hinders.* It musters up its forces, pleasures, profits, carnal relations. *Satan opposes.* He is in firm possession of the heart, musters up all his trained soldiers to keep possession, Luk. xi. 12. And yet doth Christ by this word of power carry on his work. 2. *Hereby is the dejected heart comforted.* Consolation is a work not much less than the converting of a sinner. *Luther* used to say, 'tis as hard to comfort a distressed conscience, as to raise the dead, and yet God doth by Christ accomplish it, see Isa. lxi. 1, 3. The gospel of Christ is as good at binding up of broken hearts, as at breaking of hard hearts; it is the power of God for all uses which God employs it about, when he will terrify or comfort, cast down or raise up.

IV. *In respect of his kingly office.* *Where the word of a King is, there is power*, Eccl. viii. 4. The sceptre of Christ is called, *the rod his strength*, Psl. cx. 2. its power appears, 1. *In the preservation of the church.* Many invasions have been in all ages upon the church; hell and earth have, and still are conspiring against it, and yet Christ by his kingly power hath so mightily defended it, that it hath a being to the end of the world; the flaming bush is not consumed, Exo. iii. 2. Mat. xxviii. 28. *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* Mat. xvi. 18. The church rather gets than loseth ground, if it lose in one nation, yet like the sea, it gains in some other place. 2. *In maintaining grace in the hearts of his people.* Grace in its first infusion, is but like a grain of mustard seed, or a spark of fire, in the midst of a sea of corruption, or a grain of gold in a great dunghill of sin. Nothing meets with more opposition than grace, it's opposed by corruption within, and temptations without, and yet Christ keeps it alive; this little leaven leavens the whole

lump; this little grain of mustard seed grows up to a great tree. All that the Devil; world or sin can do, cannot quench this living spark, it is *an abiding seed*, 1 Joh. iii. 5. 'tis so, because by continual influences from Christ it's kept flourishing. 3. *In subduing enemies*. Many sceptres have been warring with the church, but Christ's sceptre hath broken them all; it was this power that drowned *Pharoah*, that ruined the King of *Assyria*, that overthrew *Herod*; that brought down the heathen Emperors, that doth still rule in the midst of his enemies, and sits at God's right hand, making all his foes his footstool, Psl. cx. 1, 2. *This stone cut out of the mountain without hands* doth break in pieces, the gold, silver, brass and iron, that they become like chaff, and are carried away with the wind and this becomes a great mountain and fills the earth, Dan. ii. 35. Never yet did any sceptre dash against Christ's, but it dashed itself in pieces. Some parts of his kingdom have been for a time under captivity to worldly powers, but he hath always turned again their captivity, and broken their oppressors.

I. For Consolation to the godly. 1. *Against the power of all your enemies. Against your bodily enemies*. Though men of power set themselves against you, yet be not discouraged; there is more power in one Christ, than is in all creatures; *Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, whereby the people fall under thee*, Psl. xlv. 5. The arrows of your enemies may be strong and sharp, but Christ's are stronger and sharper than theirs. When you see no human power for your help, yet trust in the power of God, because the strength of Christ is always present, for though he seem sometimes to be out of sight, yet he is never out of call. *The power of Christ is engaged for you*. 'Tis made over to every saint with as much firmness as the wisdom of God can make it; the truth of Christ hath engaged his power for us. *The power of Christ never was, nor will be conquered*. The strength of all enemies is impaired, but the strength of Christ is vigorous. Do but look upon all the desolations that Christ hath made, and upon his promise, and you cannot sink because of any attempts, see Isa. viii. 9, 10. 'Tis in the original, *for Immanuel*. Whose power if studied and believed, might make us laugh at the combined strengths of all our foes. *Against your spiritual enemies*. Here is comfort against Satan, when

we look upon him our hearts tremble, his black legions come upon us with open mouth; how shall we be defended? why by Christ the power of God. *Greater is he that is in thee, than he that is in the world*, 1 Joh. iv. 4. *He that is born of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not*, he may touch him with temptation, but not with destruction, 1 Joh. v. 18. Christ is stronger than the strong man armed, Luk. xi. 21. he hath bruised his head already, Gen. iii. 15. and he will shortly tread him under the feet of every believer, Rom. xvi. 20. *Corruptions.* 'Tis the condition of saints to be overborne by these, they find pride, covetousness and self-love, working powerfully in them; they complain, never had any such earthly hearts as we, &c. they fast pray, watch and fight, and yet these headstrong lusts will not bow, they come to ministers, but we have no strength to bring these into subjection, yet Christ both can and will do it; consider what his power hath done against these already, he hath unhinged them; they have a vexing, not a law-giving power; he that hath removed the one, will the other also. *He hath promised to do it*, see Rom. vi. 14. Your strongest corruptions are in a deep consumption, and shall consume till they give up the Ghost. All powers must yield to the power of Christ, the power of devils and of men. *I have sworn, that every knee shall bow to me*, Isa. xlv. 23. see it applied to Christ, Phil. ii. 10. Some voluntarily, others by compulsion, all must bow; lay these promises, and this power of Christ by the actings of faith upon the necks of your strongest lusts. There is a kind of spiritual execration whereby God would have his people by faith to curse their spiritual enemies. Curse them by faith in Christ's name, and they will wither. 'Tis not only lawful but commendable to curse these enemies; as fast as they struggle in your hearts, fight against them by faith, in the power of this text, *Christ the power of God*, this is stronger than either the power of Devils, or of sins. This text is very comfortable to christians in this case. Christ can increase the fruits of their righteousness, he is strong though grace be weak, 2 Cor. ix. 10. Jesus hath a restoring power, Psl. xxiii. 3. *He restoreth my soul.* That which planted grace can preserve it under all its weakness, *His strength is made perfect in weakness*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. Thy weak graces are united to the root, which is the power of God. Christ hath undertaken to preserve as well as to plant thy graces. *All the fruits*

of righteousness are by Jesus Christ, Phil. i. 11. He can make them flourish when they languish, yea he will for his own glory; should one grace die, the root itself will be reproached. 3. *Against the weaknesses of ordinances.* When the believer considers what great matters are to be done by prayer, preaching, sacraments, &c. he is at a loss how it's possible that such weak things should reach such effects. Clay and spittle to open blind eyes; the water of Jorden to heal a leprous soul; the sounding of rams horns to batter down the walls of Jericho; how can this be? why by Christ the power of God, who makes the ordinances efficacious, 2 Cor. x. 4. this can make a weak staff keep the craziest body from falling, yea can make course pulse feed man better than most delicate dainties, Dan. i. 13. When you look on the weakness of ordinances, see the power of Christ in them. 4. *Against the violence of temptations.* Satan makes fearful onsets upon the saints, he comes upon them as a mighty giant, threatening to break all their bones. How shall I be able to stand in such a day? remember this text, *Christ the power of God.* Paul was upheld by this in the day of satan's assaults, 2 Cor. xii. 9. He that enabled him, can enable thee also to stand; and besides, Christ doth continually make intercession for thee, Luk. xxii. 32. There's more ground of confidence from the power of Christ, than there can be of diffidence from the power of the Devil: 5. *Against the want of strength in themselves, either for doing or suffering.* The doing work of christianity is very great. To mortify sin, to believe, to repent, to deny a man's self, and to walk against the stream of the times, &c. The suffering work for christianity is very great. Many deep waters are to be waded over, many reproaches to be undergone, many great burdens to be borne; when the believer considers his own weakness, he is at a loss, where he shall have strength to do these duties, to bear these burdens; this text relieves us, *Christ the power of God*, he can give thee power, both to do and to suffer his will, Phil. iv. 12, 13. Christ can strengthen thy shoulders, can gird thy loins, can make thy trembling heart confident; when weak in thyself, thou art strong in him. 'Tis for his honor to give his people power to obey his commands, and to bear his cross. 6. *It's a ground of comfort under all their spiritual falls.* The saints are heedless, and therefore they sometimes stumble; the sense of their own inability doth make them afraid they shall never

rise; this is comfortable against such fears, *Christ the power of God*. Though thou canst not lift up thyself, yet he can; he hath often promised in his word to raise them up that are fallen, Psl. cxlvi. 8. and he hath lifted up many that have fallen as low, and lain as long as thou hast; he raised *Peter*, when fallen, very foully, his own dead body, and he will raise up ours, when consumed to dust; he that can do this, can raise us up in all other falls.

II. *For terror to all the professed enemies of Christ*. Many are enemies to the person of Christ, his truths, or his government; this is a dreadful text to such. Though you think yourselves ever so strong, he hath power enough to bring you down, to wither up your strength, and to enfeeble your loins; never did any rise against him and prosper, 'tis madness, and will be damnation, Isa. xi. 14. When he spoke to those that came to apprehend him, they fell on the ground, Joh. xviii. 6. Christ hath power enough in his lips to devour in a moment, the strongest of his enemies.

III. *For Exhortation*. 1. *Put your trust in him*, Joh. xiv. 2. Believe in him for the fulfilling of all he hath undertaken, of all he hath promised; whatever he hath undertaken to do, he hath power to do it, or promised, he is able to bring to pass. Not to believe in him with all the confidence of the heart, is a secret denial of him to be the power of God. 2. *Cast all your care upon him*, rely upon him in all cases, and in all concerns. The church is described by her leaning upon her beloved, Cant. viii. 5. It notes familiarity and assurance. Lay all your weight on him, he can bear you and all your burdens. 3. *Go to him when you want power*, he can give power to the faint, and to them that have no might he can increase strength, Isa. xl. 29. He can give thee power to break thy hard heart, and to enliven thy dead graces; his power is a communicative power. 4. *Take heed of contending with him*, better set all the world against you than him. 5. *Hide yourselves with him in all troubles*; he hath chambers enough to hide you, and power enough to defend you.

SERMON XLII. 1 COR .1—24.

“ Christ the wisdom of God.”

THIS proposition as the former, hath a double reference, it relates either to the person, or doctrine of Christ, or the doctrine of salvation by Christ crucified, which *Paul* calls here by a metonymy, the wisdom of God, that is to say, the glorious method by which God manifesteth to the world his unsearchable wisdom ; I shall first handle it, as it relates to the person of Christ ; he is the wisdom of God in respect of his divine person, Luk. xi. 49. *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them Prophets and Apostles.* Mat. xxiii. 34. refers this to Christ, saying in the person of Christ *I send unto you Prophets and wise men.* Christ is often called wisdom in the scripture, see Prov. viii. 1. *Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth her voice ?* and v. 12. *I wisdom dwell with prudence,* so c. ix. 1. *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath killed her beasts, &c.* Note

I. Why Christ is called the wisdom of God.

H. What improvement we may make of this title.

I. Why Christ is called the wisdom of God. 1. *As he hath all the wisdom of the God-head in him,* see Col. ii. 9. that is substantially. Now as other fulness of the God-head dwells in Christ, so is there in him fulness of wisdom ; in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 3. The human nature hath all fulness of infused and created wisdom ; the divine hath an absolute omniscience. *Paul* attributes omniscience to the Son as well as the Father and Holy Ghost, Heb. iv. 13. *He knows things that are past, present, and to come,* Rev. i. 8. unto him, in respect of his divine nature, nothing is properly past, or to come, but all things are present ; he knows things that are most secret, the very thoughts and imaginations of the heart are open before him, see Joh. ii. 25. he formed man, and therefore must needs know what is in man ; he knows, as God, things which in their second causes are most contingent. *A sparrow doth not fall to the ground, without his providence,* Luk. xii. 6. He as God, knows those things which are not,

nor ever shall be. Rom. iv. 17. *God calleth things that are not, as if they were.* 'Tis as true of the Son as of the Father in his God-head, he knows all things by his essence, and therefore knows all things that are possible, though they shall never actually come to pass. The essence of God is the similitude of all those things which may be, if God will. An architect hath the idea of an house, which he will never build; hence Mat. xi. 21, 23. *If the mighty works which are done in thee, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago.* Our Saviour as God, knew those things which never actually did come to pass; he as God, knows the reasons of things, as well as the things themselves. We know things in the *oti*, which we do not know in the *dioti*, or causes of them; he knows the causes, as well as the things themselves. This knowledge is what the schools call that simple pure intelligence, whereby things are known in their first principles by a pure intuition, without reasoning, discourse, or succession. 2. *As he is the revealer of God's wisdom to the world.* Jesus is that prophet, by whom God hath made known to the church, both himself and his will. Joh. i. 18. *God dwells in that light which is inaccessible*; he cannot be known savingly, but by Jesus, and therefore Paul calls him *the express image of his Father's person, and the brightness of his glory*, Heb. i. 3. All the saving and comfortable discoveries which God makes of himself, are in the face of Jesus, see Cor. iv. 4, 6. Jesus is called, *the word*, Joh. i. 1. and *the word of God*, Rev. xix. 13. As speech is the character and interpreter of the mind, so Christ is the father's interpreter, who expounds his will to his church. By Christ did God reveal his counsels to the prophets through the spirit, 1 Pet. i. 11. and by him did God reveal his will in the New Testament, Heb. i. 2, so that the whole counsel of God's wisdom is published by Christ.

II. The improvement of this title. 1. It serves for the information of our judgment. (1.) *That Christ is a person very fit to be the head and counsellor of the church.* Isaiah calls him *our counsellor*, c. ix. 6. and Paul *the head of the church*, Eph. i. latter end. The fitness of Christ for these services appears from this text, *the wisdom of God*, because the wisdom of Christ is a rare wisdom, far exceeding the wisdom of any mere creature; it is a full and complete wisdom, he is perfect in wisdom and knowledge, perfect in

degrees, his wisdom extends to all things, times and occasions whatsoever. No mortal man is wise at all times, nor so wise but hath some folly. *Ahithophel* himself is, as his name signifies, *Cousin-german* to a fool. No mind is so great as to be without mixture of folly, is a true saying, but Christ is void of all such mixture. The wisdom of Christ is from himself; the divine nature infused wisdom into the human, but the wisdom of the divine nature is from itself; man's wisdom is from another, but Christ's is not only wise, but self-wise: The wisdom of Christ is infallible; our wisdom is liable to mistake, and therefore upon second thoughts we oft retract, but the wisdom of Christ can neither deceive nor be deceived. The wisdom of Christ is not liable to any decay; he is said to *increase in wisdom and knowledge*, Luk. ii. 52. but in the divine nature, his wisdom is infinite, without increasing or decreasing. Man's wisdom is decaying, he soon forgets what he before knew; a long sickness, a sharp disease, or old age turns man's wisdom into folly, but the wisdom of Christ cannot decay. Christ can communicate his wisdom. Wise men cannot convey their wisdom with their lands. *Solomon* left *Rehoboam* his kingdoms, but not his wisdom. Philosophers do not beget philosophers, but Christ can make others wise, Prov. i. 20, &c. All these prove, that he is fit to be the church's counsellor, and its head. 2. *He is very fit to be a law giver, and leader and commander to his people*, see Isa. lv. 4. Those that make rules for others to walk by, had need be men of wisdom, as well as of piety. 'Tis a trouble to an ingenious man to be under the command of a fool. Now Christ having all the wisdom of the God-head in him, is accomplished for this work. *Pharoah* thought none in his realm so fit as *Joseph* for authority, because he was a man of such deep wisdom, Gen. xli. 38, &c. All the wisdom *Joseph* had, was but a drop out of this infinite ocean; how worthy then is Christ to enact laws to order the church, he knows what is good and evil, what is convenient or not, he foresees all circumstances, and therefore fit to sit at the helm. Of all men those that rule should be wise men. A King should have a hundred hands and a hundred eyes; when your hearts kick against the authority of Christ, remember you cannot choose or desire a wiser ruler than he. 3. *That it is impossible for any person to conceal any of his sins from Christ*. Such atheism is in the hearts of men, that they think it possible to cover

their sins from him; this is in effect, to deny him to be the wisdom of God, for if so, he cannot but know the most secret passages of men's hearts, see Heb. iv. 13. The metaphor is taken from Anatomists, who by dissecting, find out every vein and artery. *Whence knowest thou me?* saith *Nathaniel* to Christ, Joh. i. 48. Before *Philip* called thee, (saith Christ,) *when thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee.* He sees all our goings, workings and wanderings. The disciples had private conferences amongst themselves, which were not very good, see Mar. ix. 33, &c. Christ without any monitor, was able to tell them every word they had spoken, see Joh. iv. 17, 18. If any person live in any secret sin, he cannot conceal it from the knowledge of Christ, his wisdom enables him to know both what men have done, and will do. 4. *That it is a very singular privilege to have communion with Christ;* especially, because all the wisdom of God is in him; wisdom is very desirable to those that love wisdom. *Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer,* Prov. 24, 26. *Diogenes'* cell is better than *Nabal's* parlour; the one is full of wisdom, the other of folly. The Queen of *Sheba* saith, concerning *Solomon's* servants, 1 Kings x. 8. *Happy are thy men, blessed are thy servants that stand before thee to hear of thy wisdom;* a greater than *Solomon* is here, who can read such lectures of wisdom to his servants, as to make them wise unto salvation, which, *Solomon* could not do. 5. *Those that want the teachings of Christ cannot be truly wise,* they may be worldly wise, but not wise to salvation; hence it is, that the scripture so ordinarily brands the wicked with the name of folly. A wicked man and a fool are synonymous in scripture, as a godly and a wise man are. They can have no saving divine wisdom in them, that are strangers to Christ; to be instructed by him, is to go in the way of understanding, Prov. ix. 6. He is not yet a step in this way that is not matriculated into the school of Christ. 6. *Those that have acquaintance with Christ, are likely to know most savingly God's counsel.* God reveals all his wisdom by his mouth, Mat. xi. 27. He that lies in Christ's bosom is like to know most of the counsels of God. When our Saviour had told his disciples that one of them should betray him, *Peter* beckoned to the disciple that leaned in his bosom to ask him of whom he spake, and he presently gets information, Joh. xiii. 24, &c. Jesus lies in the bosom of his Father, if we ask him, he will inform us of every doubt.

II. Comfort for believers. 1. *Against their ignorance.* They have need of wisdom in every thing they undertake. The work of christianity is a great and curious work, it requires both hands and eyes to manage it aright. A christian cannot pray, nor hear, nor resist temptations, nor bear any burden, nor discharge any duty in any relation without wisdom. Now if wise *Agur* complained of want of wisdom, Prov. xxx. 2, 3. how may we complain? this text ministers much comfort in this case. Though our eyes be dim, yet Christ sees clearly, he is able to furnish us with the wisdom of God, *He gives wisdom to the simple, and to the young man knowledge and discretion.* It's a comfort to a child, that though he want wisdom, yet his father hath enough to advise him. If we had store of wisdom, yet we ought not to lean to our own wisdom, Prov. iii. 5. 2. *Against the wisdom of all your enemies.* The godly have enemies subtil in wisdom, of the world, Psl. lxiv. 6. *The inward thoughts of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* Here is comfort, Christ is our counsellor, he can easily overturn their counsel, Job. v. 12, 13. he can put out their right eye, yea, c. xii. 17. *He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools.* Those that think themselves able by their craft to over reach all others, Christ can over reach them, and carry their counsels headlong, see *David*, 2 Sam. xv. 31. and so he did, the simple advice of *Hushai* was preferred before the counsel of *Ahithophel*, c. xvii. 14. 3. *Against all their straits.* Sometimes believers are in such mazes of providence, that they do not know which way to escape, all their wisdom cannot open a door of deliverance; in such cases, remember that Christ can see a way of escape, 2 Chro. xx. 12. Though *Jehosaphat* knew not what to do, yet God knew; though men be at their wits ends, yet Christ's wisdom hath no end, 2 Pet. ii. 9. The Lord knows how, and when to deliver, Jesus can unriddle and resolve those doubts that a college of Angels cannot. 5. *It's a comfort in respect of the inward bent of the heart.* Every child of God may complain with *Paul*, Rom. vii. 19, 22. *The good I would, I do not; the evil I would not, I do.* No saint can do so well as he desires to do; the hearts of God's people are so deceitful, that they are not able to say what frame their hearts are in. An hypocrite's outside is better than his inside; a believer's inside far better than his outside. Here is comfort, that Christ knows

all the inward secret desires of your souls ; this was *Peter's* comfort, Joh. xxi. 15, &c. *Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*

III: *Its terror to all Christ's enemies.* He understands all your disobediences, your conspirings against him, and knows how to bring down judgment upon you, 2 Pet. ii. 9. your power cannot preserve you, because he is the power of God; your wisdom cannot, for he is the wisdom of God.

IV. It's for Exhortation. 1. *Be willing to be ruled by him.* Take the counsel of Christ in every business; 'tis the great privilege of saints, to be directed by counsel in every thing, Prov. iii. 6. and it is their duty to ask his advice, and to submit to his counsel. Men are willing to be guided by such as are wiser than themselves; Christ is not only wiser than you, but than all the Angels of God, saith *Elihu* to *Job*, c. xxxvi. 22. *Who teacheth like him?* he teacheth universally, infallibly, effectually, powerfully, and speedily, he teaches more in one hour, than all the Angels of God can in many years. 'Tis the church's comfort, they have such a wise teacher, 'tis their duty in all things to make use of his teachings. 2. *Honor him for his wisdom.* *A man's wisdom makes his face to shine*, Eccl. viii. 1. We are ready to adore wise men, Jesus hath more wisdom in him, than all the sons of men, he is perfectly unchangeable and universally wise. The Angels received all their wisdom from and ascribed it all to him, Rev. v. 11, 12. and if Angels adore him for his wisdom, how much more should we do him honor. 3. *Do not find fault with any of his providential dispensations.* We are apt to call all providences in question, to weigh his actings in our ballance, and if they be not as we would have them, we presently quarrel; the raw mariner must not direct the wise pilot. Though we do not see the reason of providences, yet there is solid reason in every thing he doth or suffers to be done in the world: though *his ways are in the sea, and his paths in the deep waters*; they are still paths of wisdom. Could creatures in every thing trace his works his wisdom would not be infinite; let this make us silent, especially because we shall see the reason hereafter. 4. *Let it put all upon getting wisdom.* Naturally man is ambitious of wisdom; when Satan had a design to ensnare

our first parents, he baited his hook with this. *Ye shall be as God's, knowing good and evil*, Gen. iii. 6. Wisdom is an excellent thing, even natural wisdom excels folly, as far as light doth darkness, especially heavenly wisdom, see Job. xxviii. 2, 13. The more wisdom any creature hath, the more he is like Christ, and the more will Christ love him. It's a shame to religion that professors should not be exact in it's knowledge. Ignorance is a damnable sin, Hos. iv. 6. *My people are destroyed for want of knowledge* How many exhortations are given in scripture to labor for wisdom, see Prov. iv. 5, and Prov. i. 2. Wisdom is promised to them that seek in good earnest after it. We have need of wisdom in every thing. The study of wisdom is the study of Christ; go to Christ by prayer, and he will communicate his wisdom to you, he hath made many wise unto salvation, that were as brutish as any of us, 5. *Let us learn to repose ourselves on Christ without distraction*, see 1 Pet. v. 7. Care will soon break our heads, and sink our hearts, but Christ can easily take care for us, he is fit to take care, for he knows what we need better than we ourselves, and he knows how to supply all our needs; our care without him will be heart-vexing, but his care will be sufficient without ours. The care of Christ calls for diligence from us, but forbids distraction; his wisdom knows how to bring both ends together how to make every ordinance attain its ends, and every creature do that service for which it is ordained. 6. *Delight to be in his presence*. The presence of wise men is very desirable, how desirable in this respect is the presence of Christ; all his words have depth of wisdom in them; a soul may learn more from Christ in one hour than he can from all the wise philosophers to eternity. The studying of Christ is the way to true wisdom. If Solomon were on the earth, what flocking would there be to hear him speak; he that is in Christ's presence, is in the presence of a wiser than Solomon. 7. *Take heed of disparaging any holy institution of Christ's*. It's very natural to men through carnal reason, to undervalue the institutions of Christ, as ridiculous things, see 2 Kings v. 11, 12. *Nuaman* thought the Prophet ridiculous to lay such a command upon him. We are apt to judge so of preaching, of sacraments, and other ordinances of Christ; this is a great disparagement to Christ, he that makes use of those institutions, shall find that Christ will be in them to his soul, the power and wis-

dom of God. Foolish man cannot invent institutions so good as those appointed by the wisdom of God. 8. *Lean not to your own wisdom*, Prov. iii. 5. He that walks by his own wisdom rejects Christ, and shall surely fall, 1 Cor. i. 30. If thou refuse to make Christ thy wisdom, he will refuse to be thy justification, sanctification, or redemption.

SERMON XLII. 1 Cor. i. 1—24.

“Christ the wisdom of God.”

I COME now to the words as they refer to the doctrine of salvation by Christ crucified. As it is a doctrine of rich and glorious grace, so it discovers deep wisdom; this title is frequently given to it, 1 Cor. ii. 7. and Rom. xvi. 25. There is a world of mysteries in this doctrine; it is called, *the manifold wisdom of God*, Eph. v. 10.

I. That it is a doctrine of wisdom, will appear three ways

1. *In the account of God; his very ordaining it, shews it to be wisdom in his esteem*, 1 Cor. ii. 7. The wise God cannot but act in wisdom. *David* said of the works of creation, *they are all done in wisdom*, Psl. civ. 24. The work of saving man by Christ hath more wisdom in it, than the work of creation. *His promulging it to the world, shews it to be full of wisdom*, Rom. xvi. 26, 27. The wise God would never have used so much care to make it known if, he had not thought it full of wisdom. Men are willing to conceal from others, what appears to be folly; God's taking care, that it should first be committed to writing, and afterwards appointing a constant ministry to make it known to men, is a sufficient demonstration, that it's a plot of wisdom.
2. *It's a doctrine of wisdom in the account of holy men*. All the godly, in all ages, have adored this doctrine, and accounted it their best wisdom to attain its knowledge, 1 Cor. ii. 6. *Paul* was wise in human knowledge, brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, Acts xxii. 3. spake with tongues more than all in the church of Corinth, 1 Cor. xiv. 18. yet he was so addicted to this mystery, that he desired to know nothing else, 1 Cor. ii. 2. All instructed of God will confess, that no wisdom comes near this. So many wise prophets and apostles, would never

have run such hazards to preach this doctrine, if they had not seen wisdom in it ; so many wise martyrs and confessors would not have laid down their lives for it, if they had not accounted it the wisdom of God. 3. *It's the wisdom of God in the judgment of the angels*; these are wise creatures, 2 Sam. xiv. 17. Angels are called, intelligences for their wisdom, they, by their constant beholding the face of God, must needs be full of wisdom, and being spirits, they must be rich in knowledge. Now this in their account, is a doctrine of wisdom ; they pry into it, 1 Pet. i. 12. see Exo. xxxvii. 9. The mercy-seat, a type of Christ, to him the angels look; the wise angels eternally, with admiration bow themselves down to pry into this wisdom, Heb. ix. 5.

II. Many mysteries of wisdom are contained in this doctrine

1. *God assumes the human, and man is made partaker of the divine nature.* What mysteries of wisdom, that God becomes man, and yet continues to be God, Joh. i. 14. called a mystery 1 Tim. iii. 16. This mystery of the incarnation, no created understanding can comprehend ; and then man is made partaker of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 14. What an inconceivable mystery is this. 2. *Mercy and justice are both satisfied.* Justice is satisfied in the satisfaction given, and mercy in the free pardon of the sinner, Ps. lxxxv. 10, 11. Nothing but infinite wisdom knew how to reconcile these two attributes, but in this doctrine, they are perfectly agreed and triumph together. 3. *Salvation is a free gift, and yet merited, a free gift,* Rom. vi. 23. and Eph. i. 14. *a purchased possession.* A free gift to the receiver ; a purchased inheritance to the redeemer. What infinite wisdom is here. that the inheritance should be fully bought, and yet freely bestowed, Rom. vi. 4. 4. *That the creditor should become his own pay-master.* Man had by sin, made himself a debtor to God, God the creditor, doth in the satisfaction of his son, discharge the debt. God hath his whole debt from man, and yet he becomes his own pay-master. Man pays nothing, and yet God receives all. God abates all to the sinner, and yet the sinner pays God in his surety the uttermost farthing; the same Christ is both creditor and debtor, Gal. v. 3. 5. *Life is brought out of death, heaven out of hell,* Heb. ii. 14. 5. The torments of hell are endured, and by their endurance, heaven is purchased. 6. *Man is made righteous by the righteousness of another,* 2 Cor. v. 21. This is a paradox to

reason, that one man should be fed by another's meat, warmed by another's garments, enriched by another's wealth; and yet this doctrine maintains this paradox, unrighteous man becomes righteous, by denying his own righteousness, and closing with an other's, Jer. xxiii. 6. 7. *The wounds of one are healed by the wounding of another*, Isa. liii. 5. All the healings are from Christ's woundings.

I. For Information. 1. *The glory of the christian religion.* 2. *'Tis a mercy that we have this doctrine amongst us.* The greatest part of the world are strangers to it; that we have the law is a great mercy, much more that we have the gospel. 3. *The glory of the gospel ministry*, 2 Cor. iii. 6, &c. This office presents to the world the glorious salvation by Christ crucified, a glory which the angels of heaven do not obtain. 4. *That it is a folly to reject or despise this doctrine.* Who do reject it? the Jews, they to this day blaspheme it; the Turks mock at it, as a foolish doctrine, and prefer the doctrine of Mahomet to Christ crucified. The Pagans are without it; the Papists destroy it by mingling their doctrine of merits with it; in a word, all that do not by a lively faith close with it do despise it, all unbelieving Protestants despise it; this is the highest folly, it puts the fool upon infinite wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 18. 5. *They that have not this doctrine can never be wise unto salvation.* All the wisdom of God in the creation cannot make men wise for heaven without this, 1 Cor. i. 21.

II. For Exhortation. 1. Study this doctrine more, Col. iii. 16. 2. Be contented with it, as sufficient to make you wise to salvation, 1 Cor. ii. 2. add nothing to it, Joh. xvii. 3. 3. Close with it, rely on Christ crucified, with all your affiance, be not beaten off from your hold. Though men scorn justification by another's righteousness, Rom. i. 16. here's enough to answer all doubts and temptations. 4. Teach your children this doctrine. 5. Pray for its propagation, that all may embrace it, Psl. lxxvii. 2. 6. Take heed of apostatizing from it. 7. Defend this doctrine.

SERMON XLIII, JOH. 3--14.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent, &c."

IN this chapter from v. 1, to 22. we have Christ's discourse with *Nicodemus*, a Pharisee, a teacher of the Pharisees, and one of the chief rulers of the Jews; he came to Christ to be instructed by him about salvation, being convinced by his miracles, that Christ must be more than an ordinary person; that he came by night, evinced his timorousness to own Christ publicly; that he came to Christ at all, manifests some affection to him; that he calls him a teacher come from God, was a testimony that he did believe Christ was able to teach him, and that he was willing to be taught, yea, insinuated that his desire was to be informed how he might come to know and to enjoy God. *To come to Christ for instruction, is the first step to salvation.* Our Saviour hearing his request, preaches to him, the doctrine of regeneration, to shew *Nicodemus* what he was by nature, and what he should be by grace. *Christ is willing to teach those that desire knowledge.* No sooner doth *Nicodemus* ask a question, but Christ gives him an answer. *The doctrine of regeneration is necessary to be known by all that would be instructed in the way to life,* see v. 13. here Christ answered all the exceptions *Nicodemus* makes against it, and explained the nature of it. *Men by nature are meer fools in the things of Christ.* Such as are teachers of others in office, may be without the saving knowledge of these mysteries. Having finished the doctrine of regeneration, he speaks about the author of salvation, v. 13. *No man hath ascended up into heaven, &c.* In which he preacheth himself the author of eternal life; as he is God and man, and there's no other way to come to heaven but by him. He next goes on to shew how he doth accomplish salvation; this is by his death, v. 14. he then shews the instrumental cause of applying it, viz. by faith, v. xv. having discovered this, he speaks something of the principle impulsive cause of salvation, which is the love of God, Joh. iii. 16, 17. having made this known, he shews the reason why so few have benefit by Christ; this is a two-fold unbelief, and secret love to sin, v. 18, &c. This is the substance of Christ's discourse with this inquirer. The text falls under the third head, the man-

ner how Christ works out salvation. *As Moses lifted up, &c.* In which we have two things; a divine type, *Moses lifted up*, The exposition, *so must; &c.* The type is that of the brazen serpent, see Num. xxi. 8, 9. A fit way of teaching a doctor of the law, by a figure of the law. The exposition of the type, *Even so must the Son of man be lifted up.* Christ is called *the Son of man*, both because of his humanity, and of his affection to men. *By the lifting up*, we are to understand his death upon the cross, see Joh. xii. 32, 33. 'tis the same word used of his exaltation in glory, Acts ii. 33. His cross was his first step to his crown; his sufferings the porch of glory. The words opened have two points. 1. The serpent in the wilderness was a type of Jesus. 2. Christ could not have saved his elect if he had not died.

The serpent in the wilderness was a type of Christ. As Paul said, that rock was Christ, 1 Cor. x. 4. So we may say of the serpent which *Moses* made, that serpent was Christ. Note.

I. Wherein the serpent was a type of Christ.

II. How Christ excels that serpent.

I. How the serpent was a figure of Jesus, see Numb. xxi. &c. The pallel between Christ, and that serpent stands in eight things. 1. *The occasion of the making of that serpent, and of the coming of Christ into the world, are one and the same.* The people sinned, v. 5. they spake against God, and against *Moses*, &c. *The judgment of God had overtaken them for their sins.* The Lord sent fiery serpents, &c. so called because of their color, or the effect on them they bit; probably flying serpents, Isa. xiv. 29. Isa. xxx. 6. much people of Israel died. *They were not able to quench these burnings*, they found no way to free themselves from death. The coming of Christ into the world was occasioned by the same means. *Mankind had sinned*, had broken the law of God, Gen. iii: That old serpent the Devil, had beguiled man into sin. *The judgment of God had seized him*, he was naked, and full of horror; as those bitten of the serpents, had a burning in their flesh, so man had the burnings of God's wrath in his soul, he did burn already, and he expected to burn for ever. That fiery serpent the Devil, had bitten man, worse than the serpents did Israel. *Man was*

not able to heal himself, he knew no remedy to apply, nor was there any creature that knew how to help him; man's inability appears by his running away from God, Gen. iii. 8. herein he was less helpful to himself than Israel was. They went to Moses, acknowledged their sin, and desired his prayers to God for them; but man did not so much as desire God to shew him the least mercy. 2. *The end of Christ and of the serpent was the same.* That serpent was for a healing medicine to them that were stung, v. 8. The end of Christ's coming into the world, and of all that he did and suffered, was to be a healer of those stung by the bitings of the old serpent, Mal. iv. 2. and a physician, Mat. ix. 12. and the physic which heals; he healed the bodies of men, Mat. viii. 16. and their souls; the blind mind, as well as the blind eye; the deaf heart, as well as the deaf ear; the possessed soul, as well as the possessed body, received cure from him. 3. *That serpent was made for this use by the appointment of God,* v. 8. It would never have entered into the heart of Moses if God had not set him on work. The healing of the world by Christ, is a work not by man's appointment, it was God that prepared him a body fit for the work, Heb. x. 5. that designed him for the work, and that sent him down to finish it, Joh. iv. 34. It was a way of healing above the reach of man's understanding, or of the wisest angels. The angels admire it, but had they been studying since the fall of man to this day, they could never have found it out. 4. *The matter of which that serpent was made did figure out Christ.* It was made of brass, v. 9. and typified the strength of Christ. Brass is a strong metal; the strength of the Behemoth is described, Job xl. 18. Jesus was exceedingly strong. Brass may be broken or melted, but Christ can be neither, he is *the power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. he could never have endured that weight which lay upon him, if his bones had been bones of brass. *It typified the glory of the person of Christ.* Brass is a shining metal, polished brass casts forth a lustre. Christ is full of glory, *His feet are like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace*, Rev. i. 15. *His visage was more marred than any mans*, Isa. lii. 14. yet in his divine glory his face was ten thousand times brighter than the face of an angel. *Ezekiel* expresseth him to be a man, whose appearance was like brass, c. xl. 3. *It did shew that Christ was accessible* Had the serpent been of pure gold, it would have offended the eyes to have looked stedfastly upon it; and though

Christ be full of glory, yet he hath so veiled himself, that the weakest creature may look upon him without prejudice.

5. *The form was a notable type of Christ.* Though not a true serpent it was like one in form, but had no venom in it; this resembled Christ, who though he had human flesh, yet had no poison in him, Rom. viii. 3. he had truth of flesh, but only the similitude of sinful flesh, he was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners*, Heb. vii. 26. Not one drop of the serpentine poison of sin, was mingled with the holy flesh of Christ.

6. *The lifting up of the serpent upon a pole did typify Christ. It figured his crucifying. As Moses, &c. so must the Son of man be lifted up*, which lifting up is generally interpreted of his crucifixion. Had not the brazen serpent been lifted up, he could not have healed those that were stung. Had not Christ been crucified, he had not cured our diseases, and therefore his healing virtue is applied to his sufferings, Isa. liii. 5. his birth, life, and obedience, are all medicinal, but the great medicine is his blood. *It figured the lifting up of Christ in the preachings of the gospel.* Thus Calvin interprets it, *Exaltatio serpentis ad prædicationem Evangelii referri debet.* The brazen serpent would not have been conspicuous, if it had not been set upon a pole. Jesus is not made manifest but by the preaching of the gospel, 1 Cor. i. 23. Christ is the light, but preaching is the candlestick that holds it up before the eyes of the world. He that despiseth the pole of the gospel, despiseth Christ the brazen serpent, which is lifted up upon it.

7. *The way of cure by the serpent*, did typify the way of curing by Christ, it was by looking, that those stung received cure. 'Tis by faith in Christ that any sinner receives spiritual cure. Faith is the eye of the soul; by this we obtain spiritual cure, Isa. xlv. 22. An eye of saving faith fixed upon Christ, will fetch in healing for all diseases. A blind man could never have been cured, if he had been stung; he that wants the eye of faith hath no benefit by Christ.

8. *It did typify Christ in its effect.* He that looked on the serpent did find certain cure, v. 8. there's God's promise, and v. 9. there's its fulfilment; none was healed unless he beheld the serpent, all who did behold it were cured. Christ cures all that by faith looks on him. Never did any sinner in good earnest fix his eye on Jesus, but he found help for all his diseases, though they had been of longest continuance; Note the effects. *The cure was*

speedily wrought. No sooner did any bitten Israelite behold the brazen serpent, but immediately he was made whole. Christ can cure as well in a moment, as in an age, Mat. viii. 3. *Immediately his leprosy was cleansed,* and Mat. ix. 30. *Immediately their eyes received sight.* Omnipotency requires no long time to do the greatest work in. *The cure was perfectly wrought.* One glance upon the brazen serpent, fetched out all the inflammation, and made the body perfectly whole, and Jesus cures as perfectly, as he doth speedily, Mat. xiv. 36. Christ when he heals, heals to the bottom; a skilful artist that heals perfectly. *The cure was freely wrought.* It was but looking, and the work was done; Christ doth freely communicate, Isa. lv. 1. and man is so indigent that he cannot buy these precious things.

II. How Christ excels that serpent. 1. *The brazen serpent did not heal by any virtue it had in itself,* it was a lifeless thing, and all it did was meerly by virtue of the divine institution; it was indeed the power of Christ that healed such as looked on the serpent; but Christ heals such as are stung with sin by his own power; virtue doth really go forth from him to the sinner; guilt is done away by the application of his righteousness, and filthiness removed by the communication of his grace. I perceive saith Jesus, *That virtue is gone out of me,* Luk. viii. 46. and Luk. vi. 19. 2. *The brazen serpent healed no disease, but that one.* If any Israelite had been sick of any other disease, he had no hope of being healed this way. Though those that were bitten with these serpents recovered, yet did many die in the wilderness of other diseases after the erecting of the figure, Numb. xxv. 9. By looking to Jesus, all the diseases of the soul are perfectly healed, Joh. v. 4. Christ can perfectly cure the diseases of the head and of the heart. 3. *The brazen serpent did not keep that virtue always,* it remained many hundreds of years after the people came into Canaan, but we read of no cure after this time, it was kept as a holy sign of God's presence, but it had no healing virtue that we read of afterward; but Christ heals for ever, all generations to the end shall find a sanative power in him, he is as good at curing now, as he ever was, and he will be to the end of the world; he is a healer for ever. 4. *The brazen serpent was at last utterly abolished.* The people having idolized it, Hezekiah broke it in pieces, calling it *Nehushtan*, that is, a

piece of brass, 2 Kings xviii. 4. Though it was of God's own appointment, yet when the idolatry could not be reformed, he defaced it, and took away both name and thing; but Christ the true brazen serpent abides for ever, he can never lose his virtue, nor be defaced. 5. *It was idolatry to worship that serpent.* Hezekiah brake it in pieces because the people burnt incense to it, 2 Kings xviii. 4. but its impiety not to worship Christ,—not to burn spiritual incense of praise and prayer to him continually; angels and saints in heaven adore and worship before his face, and shall do to all eternity. 6. *The brazen serpent did not give eyes to them that were bitten,* but Christ gives eyes to the blind, Isa. v. 61, init. and Luk. iv. 18. did not Christ give sight to the eye, no soul would ever be healed. 7. *The brazen serpent endured nothing by being fixed to the pole,* being lifeless it was not capable of any pain, but Christ suffered much torment when he was lifted up upon the cross, the iron entered his soul, he was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. The serpent bare no curse, but Christ was made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. that did not take the stings of the fiery serpent into itself, but all the stings of the fiery serpent did Jesus take into his own breast; that did not bear the sorrows of such as were bitten, but Christ did, Isa. liii. 4. he quenched our burnings, and set his own flesh on a flame. 8. *The brazen serpent was framed by Moses,* Num. xxi. 8, 9. he made the pole and the serpent, but Christ was formed by God; as he was God, he was not created, but as man, he was. 9. *The brazen serpent could not preserve any from being bitten,* it had a power by God's ordination to recover, but not to prevent the sting; but Christ doth not only heal those that are stung, but preserves us from being stung. The Devils would fasten many more stings in the hearts of the elect, if he did not hinder them; he doth not only pluck out the stings, but fray away the serpents themselves, that they cannot sting so often as they would, if not hindered. 10. *Those that were recovered by looking on the brazen serpent died afterward,* they died not of that biting, but by some other disease, but those healed of the bitings of these spiritual serpents, live for ever, Joh. xi. 25, 29. A believer shall die the temporal death, but he is free from eternal dying. 11. *The brazen serpent was obtained by the prayer of Moses.* The people came to him, acknowledged their sin, and desired of him to intreat the Lord for them, he did so, and God orders him to make a

serpent of brass ; but Jesus was obtained without so much as being desired. There was no free confession of sin made by *Adam*, no *Moses* to mediate to God ; had God staid till man desired a remedy, he had staid to this moment ; *I am found of them that enquired not after me*, Isa. lxxv. 1.

I. For Information. 1. *That the Jews had the knowledge of Christ as well as we.* The sacrifices put them daily in mind of him ; they had many notable types, as the rock, the red sea, the pillar of fire, and this brazen serpent. No doubt the more spiritual Jews did understand these types, and could spell Christ out of them, Heb. iv. 2. Though they had but Christ in types, yet they had the same Christ we have; 2. *That the stung condition of Israel is a representation of man by nature.* The fiery serpents typified the Devils ; their bitings those temptations by which satan assaults men, and those sins which he draws men into ; but a man might make some fence against those serpents, they could not fly into houses, but these can wind themselves into the closet. An *Israelite* might go to heaven though he died by those serpents. but he not cured of sinful bitings, can never go to heaven. Those serpents were visible, these are invisible, and so the more dangerous. Who would not pity men that are fastened in dungeons where poisonous serpents are continually stinging them ; such as are under the dominion of the Devil, are in a worse condition. Some of these serpents are continually thrusting their poisonous stings into their precious souls. He that reads this story cannot but pity *Israel* ; sinful men that are under the bitings of devils deserve more pity, and the rather, because they are not sensible of their own misery. So many lusts are like so many cruel serpents, drinking up the blood of the soul. 3. *The necessity of Christ.* 'Tis a misery to want him, 'tis an unspeakable happiness to enjoy him. How sad was it with *Israel* when bitten, and had no way of healing ! How joyful when the brazen serpent was erected ! though the fiery serpents were not presently taken away, yet that they had a sovereign remedy against their venom was an unspeakable mercy. Those that want Jesus, have no suitable remedy against evil spirits ; but Christ shields us against all serpents, and lusts. 4. *How willing God is to give his people relief against their pressing miseries.* No sooner did *Israel* cry, but the brazen serpent was erected : no sooner did man receive

the sting of death, but the true brazen serpent was set up. God is able and willing to succour his afflicted people; when *Israel* was dying, then is a remedy provided, Isa. xli. 17, &c. 5. *How suitable is Jesus*, he is not only a rich, but a proper good; he is food to the hungry, clothes to the naked, liberty to the prisoner, eyes to the blind, and a brazen serpent to cure those stung by fiery serpents; he is every way suitable to the soul, Rev. iii. 18. 6. *The necessity of preaching the gospel*. The brazen serpent was lifted upon the pole; Christ is held out in the gospel, this is the golden pole by which Christ as a healer, is made visible to the world. The serpent on the pole healed *Israel*; Christ manifested in the gospel heals bitten souls. The preaching of the gospel is the alabaster box, wherein Christ the precious ointment is kept, by the opening of this box, his saviour is manifested to the world. 7. *The necessity of the knowledge of Christ*, Joh. xvii. 3. He that is ignorant of Christ knows not where to have cure for any spiritual disease. 8. *That the church's life and health is in and through Christ alone*, Jer. xxxiii. 6, 15. All that live, live by him, all cured, are cured by him.

II. For Consolation. This text is comfort to all stung of the old serpent, Mal. i. 2. I must lay down this caution, what I am now to speak, belongs not to the impenitent scorner, but to the mourning sinner; he that blesseth himself in his sin, see Deut. xxix. 18, &c. but broken-hearted sinners may hear. 1. *There is no cause of despair from the multitude of their sins*. Many of God's people see the stings of the serpent in their head, hands, eyes, and heart, they are nothing but wounds, Isa. i. 6. Now the brazen serpent was able to cure an Israelite, though his body was full of bitings. The text says not, if a serpent had bitten a man in one place, he might be healed, but indefinitely, *If a serpent had bitten a man*, Numb. xxi. 8, 9. Christ is able to cure thousands of wounds as well as one, Isa. liii. 5, 6. All the iniquities of the elect Christ can heal, Heb. vii. 25. He that saves to the uttermost, saves from all manner of sins; fear not the number of thy sins; one wound cannot be healed without Christ and by him all are healed. 2. *There is no cause of despair because of the greatness of sin*, saith a believer. The sting of the serpent is gone to the very bowels, yet be comforted, grace will reach as deep as the sting. The promise of heal-

ing is made to great as well as to small sins, Mat. xii. 13. Christ hath healed those that have had as deep and broad wounds as thou canst have. Look on David's wounds, murder and adultery, yet he was healed. Look on *Manasseh's* wounds, murder, idolatry, sorcery, &c. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 2, &c. yet he was healed. Look on *Paul's* wounds, a persecutor, a blasphemer, injurious, yet he was cured, 1 Tim. i. 13. and that as a pattern to others, v. 16. Christ never asks any sinner how great his wounds are, or how many, but whether willing to be healed. There are some in heaven who committed greater sins than many in hell. Infinite mercy and merit make no difference as to healing. 3. *There is no cause of despair from the long continuance of sin.* An Israelite was healed, how long soever the sting had been in him. It's the fear of many saints, that their sins have been long upon them; if their wounds were green, they could hope, but they brought their diseases with them into the world, what hope can they have? as much as if the sore were but an hour old. All in heaven brought their diseases with them into the world as well as you, one had *an issue of blood twelve years*, Mat. ix. 20. another *kept his bed eight years by reason of the palsy*, Acts ix. 33. a third had *a spirit of infirmity eighteen years*, Luk. xiii. 11, &c. a fourth had *an infirmity thirty-eight years*, Joh. v. 5, &c. yet Christ cured them. Though earthly Physicians cannot heal natural diseases, yet Christ can, Mar. ix. 31, 22. *He had been possessed of a Devil from a Child*, yet Christ presently healed him. Though going out of the world, by looking to Christ thou shalt have cure. Christ healed the thief when he was upon the cross, as an example to prevent despair. 4. *There is no cause of despair from relapses into the same sin.* O saith the soul, if I had committed such a sin but once, I could hope, but I have often committed it; this is very sad, yet there is hope. The brazen serpent cured Israel, though they were bitten repeatedly, Numb. xxi. 8, 9. *Paul* persecuted the saints more than once, Acts xxiii. 4, 5. he was the Devils post-master, riding from place to place to imprison them, yet did he obtain mercy. *Lot* suffered himself to be made drunk again and again, and commits the sin of incest with both his daughters, Gen. ix. 32, &c. yet he was healed. I speak not this to encourage the impenitent, but to comfort the mourner. Christ commands men to forgive offenders, *seventy times seven a day*, Mat. xviii. 22. and he hath

infinitely more mercy than man, see Hos. xiv. 4. not one but many backslidings. 5: *There is no cause of despair, though you have slighted mercy.* O saith the soul, if I had only sinned, I could hope, but I have rejected cure; Christ hath called, and I have scorned him; this is much to be lamented, and makes a sinner's condition most sad; yet now if you are willing there is hope. Christ hath healed many who have slighted his grace. Few indeed came in to Christ at the first call; *Zaccheus* did, Luk. xix. 5, 6. but this is not the happiness of every sinner. The brazen serpent would have healed an Israelite, although he had formerly slighted that way of cure. It is Christ's commands to his ministers, to wait on sinners, *If at any time God will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth,* 2 Tim. ii. 25. **Objection.** *Is there not a set day, which if sinners neglect, the door is shut?* Luk. xix. 42. **Answer.** There is a truth in this, but yet 1. *There is no day but a sinner ought to come in.* Though the day of Christ's acceptance may be over, yet is not the day of thy submission over while thou livest. Thou art still under the command. 2. *Whether the day of acceptance be over is a secret, which no man living knows,* Deut. xxix. 29. 3. *While thou findest any inclination, thou mayest be sure the day of grace is not over.* God usually gives up the sinner to a seared conscience, that he doth not desire to come. 4. *So long as God calls thee, the day is not over.* While the angels move the water, the day of healing is not past, Joh. v. 4. While the word calls, or conscience speaks, God's spirit strives; the eleventh hour laborers had the penny, as well as the laborers of all the day 5. *There is no cause of despair from the unworthiness of means.* Saith the sinner, if I were qualified, then I might hope Christ would heal me, but I can do nothing, and I have nothing to move Christ to take me in hand; this savors of pride: what was required of an Israelite? nothing but to look to the brazen serpent, and Christ requires nothing but that thou see thyself bitten with serpents, and look to him with a holy confidence that he may cure thee, with an easy, speedy and certain cure.

III. Exhortation. 1. *Take heed of using any other way of healing* It is satan's great policy to divert sinners from Christ, and to persuade them to seek a cure elsewhere. *Sometimes to their own righteousness.* This is the popish way

of curing, Isa. liv. 6. filthy rags which will not heal. Our best works have stings in them, and will sting us worse than the serpents, if we think to be healed by them. *Sometimes to their own duties*, as prayer, hearing, &c. these are good helps to wounded consciences, but if we stay here we stay short of cure. All thy prayers, tears and repentings are not Christ. The brazen serpent was not needful, if those would have healed, Heb. x. 5, &c. *Sometimes to merry company*. When conscience is stung, they go to *David's harp*, as *Saul* did, this may give a little ease for a time, as *Saul* had, but it will not heal the wound. Take heed of any false cures; men are apt to try mountebanks till they have soundly smarted for it. Israel had been undone if they had used any other way, and we shall be undone, if we fix our eye upon any thing short of Christ. Let me propound but a few things. *This is the most honourable way of healing*. Honourable to God, to Christ and to ourselves, for God's justice is satisfied, Christ's merits are exalted, and the sinner hath all the worth of Christ communicated to him. *Using any other cure is rejecting Christ as if he were insufficient*, and such rejects the infinite wisdom and love of God, and the infinite goodness and love of Christ, who underwent the wrath of God, to make a medicine for our guilty souls. *You make your wounds the worse by using any other means*. You create the more trouble, anxiety, and grief to your hearts, by deserting Christ. 2. *Bless God for Christ*. Israel was very thankful for the serpent; we have more cause to bless God for the true serpent, 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57. 3. *Acknowledge all your spiritual healings to be by Christ*. If any be healed, Christ hath done it; none but he can heal such desperate wounds. *Make use of Christ to heal your spiritual diseases*. There were two things required of Israel for cure by the brazen serpent: they must see themselves bitten by the fiery serpents; they must look to the brazen serpent, Numb. xxi. 8. Those that would be healed by Christ, must be sensible of their bitings, and must by faith look to Jesus. *Christ declares this to be the end of his coming*, Luk. xix. 10. Not simply such as are lost, but such as see themselves lost, Isa. lxi. 1, 2. broken-hearted sinners. *The form of invitation used by Christ he was this*, Mat. xi. 28. Christ calls not sinners but as sinners, but as laboring burdened sinners, overwhelmed with sin. *The order of his working on those he hath healed, shews this*, they first saw themselves stung, Acts ii. 37.

if as sharp points of daggers had been fastened in their hearts; so it was with the jailor, Acts xvi. 27, &c. and with *Paul*, Acts ix. 4. This is Christ's usual way, Joh. xvi. 8. All have not the same degree of conviction, but so much is wrought as to cause the sinner to see sin the bitterest, and Christ the sweetest thing in all the world. This sense of the bitings of the soul is wrought ordinarily by the preaching of the law, this is the most certain and expeditious way, Gal. iii. 24. The law hath a three-fold work for conviction; it sets before the sinner the miserable estate of man by sin, with the curse due unto him, Rom. iii. 20. Hereby *Paul* came to see sin, Rom. vii. 7, 9. The law convinceth the sinner that he is the guilty person to whom all that wrath belongs; it speaks as *Nathan* to *David*, *Thou art the man*. The law lets the sinner see the utter impossibility of his personally satisfying it, see the Jailor, Acts xvi. 29. It is called, *The spirit of bondage*, Rom. viii. 15. Christ takes this way, that sin may be imbittered, Jer. ii. 19. It's called gall and wormwood, Deut. xxix. 18. That the sinner may be brought to a holy shame for sin. Christ will have sinners bear their shame, Ezek. xvi. 52. Now if he healed before the sinner saw himself stung, he would be frustrated of this. That the sinner may be willing to come up to his terms. When Christ begins to deal with a soul about salvation, he will not come up to the price of the cure; Christ by taking this course, makes him willing to accept of any terms; they were willing to do any thing, Acts ii. 37. and so was *Paul*, Acts ix. 6. That the mercy of the cure may be more valued, Psl. ciii. init. 'Tis a costly work for those that deserve it not, yet man is not thankful for it. The sense of our stings enhanceth its price, 1 Tim. i. 15. And that the skill of Christ may be more perfectly seen. Christ seeks to advance his own glory by healing sinners, therefore they must first feel the smart, and see the danger. Men that thinks little ails them do not value the Physician, but when men see their low estate, they are thankful for help. Compare yourselves with the law, and pray that God would convince you of your sin, and self-insufficiency. You must by faith look to Christ, and this actually cures; this is required, it implies three things. *A persuasion of Christ's ability, and of his readiness*. The soul must not only say, if thou wilt thou canst. but Lord, I know thou art both able and willing. *An actual closing with Christ upon the promise*. The soul

must touch the border of his garment, and actually draw virtue from him, short of this, fall short of cure. Judas saw his wounds, but did not look on Christ, but despaired of help. Motives to look to Christ. *The free promise.* Many promises are made, that such shall be cured. *The oath of Christ* Heb. vi. 17, 18. *God's end in sending Christ*, Isa. lxi. 1. Job. vi. 37, 40. *The multitudes Christ hath healed.* 'Tis for Christ's honor, Joh. v. 23, 24. You cannot do him greater glory than to lay all your stress on him. Now there are six things which faith must look at in Christ for healing. *The merits of his blood.* *The abundance of his grace*, Joh. i. 14, 16. *His resurrection*, Rom. iv. 25. *His intercession*, Rom. viii. 34. *His relation to us*, Heb. ii. 16, 17. *His being our surety*, Heb. vii. 22.

Doctrine II. *That Christ could not have saved his elect if he had not died*, Heb. ix. 22. Isa. liii. 5. Joh. xii. 32. Whether God could by his absolute power have saved without the death of his Son, I shall not now dispute. It is the opinion of many, that God being the offended party, might have freely forgiven sin, without the blood of Christ; but suppose his determinate counsel to bring his elect to heaven this way, there was a necessity that Christ should die; scripture speaks of this as a necessary thing, Mat. xxvi. 5. 4. Here note two parts.

I. Why this was necessary.

II. Why God would thus save his church.

1. The necessity of Christ's death depends. 1. *On the accomplishment of the divine decree*, those are absolute and certain, called *faithfulness and truth*, Isa. xxv. 1. and c. xlvi. 10. says that his counsels shall stand. Now it was the eternal counsel of God, that Christ should suffer for the salvation of the elect, Acts ii. 23. and the Jews in that bloody tragedy, did only what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done, Acts iv. 28. 2. *The fulfilling of God's promise.* God had first promised Adam, that the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head, Gen. iii. 15. This promise of the sufferings of Christ was often renewed by the prophets, and therefore it was necessary that Christ should suffer, Luk. xxii. 37. God neither will nor can falsify his promise. 3. *The ratification of the legal sacrifices*, these did represent two things. That man's blood deserved to be

shed ; and that the blood of Christ should be shed for the expiation of sin, Heb. ix. 13, 14. The believing Jews did not rest on those sacrifices, but looked through them to Christ, the true expiatory sacrifice, therefore it was necessary that Christ should be sacrificed answer to the type.

II. Why God would take this way to save the elect. 1. *To discover his infinite love.* This lifting up of Christ doth lift up the love of God very highly, Rom. v. 8. The Apostle, in 1 Joh. iv. 10. speaks of this as the best discovery of love which could be made. 2. *To magnify his infinite wisdom.* The wise Angels pry into this deep mystery, 1 Pet. i. 12. The cross was the theatre of divine wisdom. God did not only shew himself a good, but a wise God ; yea God only wise. Well may *Paul* say, *Christ the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. 3. *To manifest his justice.* God would so save the sinner, that he might preserve the glory of his justice. Better all the world should perish, then that there should be a flaw in divine justice. Now in the death of Christ, God hath full satisfaction to his justice, and yet carries on the work of infinite mercy ; this fulfils Psl. lxxxv. 10. Mercy is exalted, and justice is cleared up, see Rom. iii. 25. 4. *To advance the honor of Christ.* The work of creation honors the Father, the work of sanctification the spirit, the work of redemption the son. When *Judas* was gone out to betray Christ, our Saviour said, Joh. xiii. 31. *Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.* Hence he triumphed upon the cross, Col. ii. 15. When his murderers thought to clothe him with shame, they clothed him with glory.

The uses. 1. *It shews the heinousness of sin.* We have ordinary thoughts of it, Prov. xiv. 9. But the way of cure discovers it to be a thing very horrid. The guilt was so black, that nothing but Christ's blood could do it away ; the spot so deep, that nothing but this could fetch it out. 2. *The strength of Christ's love.* His death was a voluntary necessity ; love brought him under the necessity of dying, Rev. i. 5. The Jews collected Christ's love to *Lazarus* by his tears, Joh. xi. 36. we may better gather it from his blood ; he bled to death to save us. 3. *The costliness of man's redemption ;* it is the price of blood. We had been for ever cast down to hell, if Christ had not thus been lifted up. The redemption of souls is precious, Psl. xlix. 8. 4. *The*

necessity of an interest in Christ. As it was necessary that he should die, so it is necessary, that we should have an interest in him, Col. i. 27. This interest may be known; *by the mortification of sin*, Rom: viii. 10. *Conformity to Christ in all holiness*, 1 Joh. ii. 6. *By a heart studious of advancing Christ.* Christ shall rule him, and all his who are interested in Christ. 5. *Why the scripture doth so appropriate the salvation of men to the death of Christ*, see Isa. liii. 5. Not as if his life had no influence in it; his holy birth, his holy life, &c. had an influence in the work, but his lifting up was the issue of all; without this, man could not be saved. Look on Christ's death as a necessary work, it could not be otherwise; this will render sin odious, Christ sweet, and salvation precious.

SERMON XLIV. ROM. 1—40.

“For Christ is the end of the law.”

PAUL in the beginning of this chapter very passionately bewails the sad condition of the Jews; who were rejected of God. What occasioned his sorrow and their rejection, was their ignorant and blind zeal, in preferring their own righteousness, to the righteousness of God; they deserved pity from men, because they did it ignorantly, but rebuke from God, because they had sufficient light to discover their ignorance, and yet would not be convinced, nor renounce their own righteousness, to cleave to the righteousness of God. This they rejected, because they rejected justification by Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every believer. The words are a proposition, in which are, 1. The subject, *Christ*. 2. The predicate, *the end of the law*. The doctrine. *That Christ is the end of the law*. In discussing this point two things are to be unfolded.

I. What law is here meant.

II. In what respect Christ is the end of the law.

I. What law is here meant. The law of God is divided into judicial, ceremonial, and moral. 1. The judicial law is what did contain sundry statutes which God delivered to the Jews, for the administration of their civil polity, we

read of them, Exo. c. xxi. c. xxii. &c. Divines hold a two-fold special end of this law. That the people of Israel, and their civil policy might be distinguished from other nations, Est. iii. 8. That those laws might be to them types of that good order which the kingdom of the Messiah should be administered withall. 2. The ceremonial law was what did prescribe certain sacred rites for the external worship of God by the people of Israel. This had reference to them as a church. *Paul* calls it the hand writing of ordinances, the law of commandments, Eph. ii. 15. This law had divers special ends, to distinguish the Jews as a holy people from all profane people, Eph. ii. 14. To put them in mind of the pollution of sin, and of the severe punishments their sin deserved. Circumcision, the sacrifices, the paschal lamb, and those divers washings commanded in this law, did teach both the defilement and the deserved punishments of sin. To typify the Messiah who was to come, and all spiritual benefits purchased and communicated to the church by him, *Paul* calls it a typical law, Col. ii. 17. Heb. x. 1. 3. The moral law is that holy and perpetual rule of righteousness given to men to order their lives and manners aright, both towards God, their brethren, and themselves. This is summarily set down in the ten commandments, and is called sometimes *the commandment*, Rom. vii. 8, &c. *The commandment of God*, Mar. vii. 9. *The royal law*, Jam. ii. 8. *The perfect law of liberty*, Jam. i. 25. *The law of works*, Rom. iii. 27. *The law of righteousness*, Rom. ix. 31. Now the text speaks principally of this law, yet are not the other excluded, for the Jews sought after righteousness, as well by the observance of the ceremonial, as of the moral law.

II. In what respects Christ is called the end of the law,
 1. *In regard of the judicial law, Christ hath abolished it*, so that Christians are not bound to observe its rules. The Jewish polity was to continue until the coming of the Messiah, Gen. xlix. 10. After his death it was utterly to be overthrown, Dan. ix. 26, 27. The judicial law as founded in the law of nature, which is unchangeable, binds all christians to have laws for the punishments of wickedness, for the rewarding good, for the preserving of justice and public peace among themselves; but as it prescribes particular laws for the Jews, it is abolished by Christ, and not to be enjoined any further than as the common equity of those

laws require. 2. *In regard of the ceremonial law, Christ hath abrogated it, Eph. ii. 14, 15, he hath blotted out the hand writing of ordinances which was against us, and taken it out of the way, having nailed it to his cross.* All its rites were types of Christ, and when the substance came, they for ever ceased. Paul affirms the observation of this law to be an implicit denial of Christ, and a cutting off from all benefit by Christ Gal. v. 2. The church put together, the dawning of the day, and the flying away of the shadows, Cant. ii. It is absurd to idolize the shadows when the substance is revealed.

III. In respect of the moral law; how Christ is the end of this, I shall shew negatively and affirmatively.

I, Negatively. 1. *We must not think that Christ hath freed believers from the obligation of the moral law,* The Antinomians hold that believers are freed, not only from its curse, which all grant, but from its obedience, that under the law of faith, they are made free from the observation of this law; but the moral law is that eternal rule of life which believers as well as others are engaged to obey, upon pain of God's displeasure. Christian liberty would be no better than lawlessness, if it should absolve believers from moral obedience. *The moral law in substance is written upon the hearts of men by nature.* The law of faith doth not abrogate the law of nature, and therefore the moral law is not abolished, Rom. ii. 14, 15. Those who never heard of the law given on mount Sinai are taught by the very light of nature to observe the substance of what is there enjoined. *The whole scriptures are but an exposition of the moral law, and therefore it's abrogation would be their abrogation.* All the doctrines delivered by the Prophets were commentaries of the law, to press the obedience of the law by promises, encouragements and reward, and to keep men from violation by penalties, and threatenings denounced against its transgressors. All their preaching would have been superfluous, at least to believers, if they had been freed from the obedience of the law. *The moral law as given on mount Sinai, was given as a branch of the covenant of grace, Exo. xx. 2.* where God makes mention of his being with them a God in covenant, I am Jehovah thy God. *The moral law was delivered on mount Sinai by Jesus.* Stephen tells us that Moses received the lively oracles of the law from the Angel which spake to him in

the wilderness, Acts vii. 38. that Angel was Christ, he, they tempted, 1 Cor. x. 9. Now if it was published by Christ, it is fond to say, that it is abolished by Christ, especially as the matter of it is of eternal concernment. *Christ when on earth, declared that he came not to destroy the law*, Mat. v. 17. yea, in Mat. v. 21, 22, &c. he presseth obedience to it, and gave a more spiritual interpretation of it than the Scribes and Pharisees, for he extended it not only to the outward actions, but to the inward affections. *The Apostles deny its abolition by the gospel*. Paul abhors such an opinion, Rom. iii. 31. yea, where he doth professedly dispute of gospel liberty, he urges the necessity of obedience to the law, Gal. v. 13, 14. There is a sweet harmony between the law, and the gospel, for the spirit of Christ in the gospel, doth sweetly and powerfully enable the heart to render a more cheerful obedience to the law, than it could do before. *It's a great privilege to be under the obedience of the law*. The law is of great use, and therefore its abolition would be prejudicial, it is a bridle to restrain sin, a glass to discover sin, a help to carry on conversion, and a light to give understanding to the simple, Psal. xix. 7, 8. the souls delight, Psal. cxix. 174. It is spiritual food, physic, strength and health to the soul. 2. *Christ is not the end of the law, as if the law were no more to be preached*, for Christ and his Apostles preached it.

II. Affirmatively, Christ is called the end of the law, because, 1. *Christ is its scope*. The law as published on mount Sinai was given to Israel, to lead them to Christ; to convince of sin, and of its desert, that thereby the sinner seeing his own inability to fulfil its righteousness, might be driven out of himself to Christ. *The law was our school master to bring us to Christ*, Gal. iii. 24. The finger of the law points to Christ in every thing, its precepts point to him, as he is by whom they are accomplished; its promises, as he by whom they are ratified; its threatenings, as he by whom they are escaped. Christ is the sum of the gospel, and the very scope of the law. 2. *Christ is the end of the law in his accomplishment of it*. He is the complement of the law; he hath paid that debt which was due to God for transgression, Gal. iii. 13. paid the very uttermost farthing; fulfilled the righteousness of the law, Mat. iii. 15. He did every thing in the strictest exactness which the law required; the law of God never was, nor will

be fulfilled in the personal obedience of any beside him. 3. *Christ is the end of the law, as he doth enable believers to yield obedience to it.* Till men be regenerated, they resist the law and have no heart to walk in its rules, but Christ renews the heart, and thereby inclines it to a willing obedience, see Ezek. xxxvi. 27. 4. *Christ is the end of the law, as believers do by him attain to that justification which the law publisheth.* The end of the law is to justify those that obey it. *He that doth these things shall live in them; it's called the law of righteousness,* Gal. iii. 12. By reason of our corruption, we are not able to fulfil the law, and so cannot attain unto righteousness; but Christ by fulfilling the law for us, becomes our righteousness, he is the end of the law; he is to a believer, what the law would have been, if he could have kept it, righteousness and justification.

The uses. Upon the judicial and ceremonial law, it teacheth, 1. *The great happiness we have by Christ.* He hath put an end to the law of ceremonies, it hath no tie upon Christians, Rev. xii. 1. *Mede* applies it to this, the primitive church shining by Christ the sun of righteousness, treads under foot all Jewish ceremonies. The ceremonial law was a yoke of bondage, Gal. v. 1. *A burden that neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear.* Acts xv. 10. It did greatly afflict the conscience, its rules were so many, and so intricate, that they could never be so exactly observed but that some scruples would abide on the conscience, Heb. vii. 19. many meats were forbidden; very chargeable was their worship; they must go to Jerusalem to worship; the touching of a dead body made them unclean, &c. Christ hath put an utter end to this, yet the reading of the ceremonial law is not unprofitable; hereby we shall see the uniform way of salvation of believers in both Testaments; we shall better know how to prize our liberty; we shall be helped in the study and faith of the gospel; we shall see how the truth answers the type; we shall see the love of Christ in submitting to it, and in abrogating of it. 2. *The mistake of those that would impose the judicial law on christian commonwealths.* This was only given for the Jews, and not binding to us, but only in their general equity, and therefore the scripture sometimes argues from them, as 1 Cor. ix. 8, 9, &c. but to obtrude the body of those laws on christians, is very great ignorance.

Use 11. As it refers to the moral law we learn, 1. *That believers are freed from the curse of the moral law.* There are two things in the moral law, the mandatory and the damnatory part. There is obligation to duty, and a binding over to the curse for default of duty. Believers are not freed from the commanding of the law, but from the condemning curse; for Christ is the end of the law, he hath for believers endured its curse, and freed them from it, Gal. iii. 13. *What a severe thing the curse of the law is*, what a large extent it hath, it reacheth to body, soul, estate, name and posterity, Gal. iii. 10. all things are comprehended. He is cursed in soul, body, estate and duties, see Deut. xxviii. 16, &c. There are curses written, and curses not written; who can stand under the least of these, and yet all under the curse must endure these, and many more than can be imagined. This curse is due for the least offence; one vain word, one sinful thought, the least digression either in omission or commission, makes a person liable to all these curses, Deut. xxviii. 15. *How frequently this law is transgressed by the best.* He that is most circumspect, doth a thousand times break it every day, Jam. iii. 2. *The most secret miscarriage is known to the law-giver; his eyes are upon the ways of the children of men*, Job. xxxiv. 21, 22. *He marketh our steps*, Job. xxxiii. 11. *He telleth our wanderings*, Psl. lvi. 8. not only in affliction, but in sin. *Our iniquity is sewed up in a bag, yea it is sealed*, Job. xiv. 17. The sinner cannot put a blind before the eye of the heart-searching God. *The justice and truth of the law-giver are engaged to inflict this curse.* He cannot be faithful and true, if the curse do not take place; yea his very being is engaged. How often doth God use that oath, *As I live*, Jer. xxii. 24. Ezek. v. 8, &c. Is it not a happiness therefore to be delivered from this curse? 2. *The benefit of preaching the moral law.* Christ and his Apostles preached it, and it is profitable and necessary that ministers should. 'Tis not to be preached as a way of justification, but in subordination to the gospel. By the preaching of the law, the soul is prepared for Christ. None will so perfectly understand Christ, as those who understand the law. The law humbles, the gospel comforts; the law wounds, Christ heals; The law shews us what God may expect, the gospel what Christ hath merited, and God will accept. 3. *That believers have a righteousness in Christ, as full as if they had fulfilled the law.* Christ being the end of the law for righteousness

to believers, invests them with a righteousness every way as complete as the personal obedience of the law would have invested them withal, Rom. viii. 3. 4. Yea, Christ's righteousness is better than that they should have had by *Adam*. *Because of the dignity of his person*. He being the Son of God, his righteousness is more glorious than *Adam's* was, it is the righteousness of God, and we are made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. The first *Adam* was a meer man; the second *Adam* is God and man. *Because this righteousness is perpetual*. *Adam's* was mutable, he lost his righteousness; but they cannot be lost. God hath so ordered it, that the elect lose nothing by *Adam's* fall; the loss of his righteousness, hath brought to light a better righteousness. *That the dignity of the law is maintained in the salvation of the elect*. Man violated it, God would have it satisfied before man could be saved. This was done by Christ, he fulfilled it actively and passively, and so the injury is recompenced, Isa. xlii. 21. 5. *The miserable condition of those who have no interest in Christ*, they are still under the law as a covenant of works, Rom. vii. 1, &c. All the seed of *Adam* are married to one of the husbands, either to the law, or to Christ. Now to be married to the law, is very sad. *The law rejects the best duty for the least miscarriage*. Hence it is that God speaks so contempt of all the services of unregenerate men, Isa. i. 11, 12. Jer. vi. 20: Isa. lxvi. 3. The law deals with men according to the strictest terms of justice, it allows no gracious interpretation, as the gospel doth; it is a covenant, not of mercy, but of pure justice. *This covenant hath no mediator*. The breaches under the covenant of grace are pardonable, because there is a mediator to interpose, but here there is no mediator to make up any breaches; no blood of Christ to sprinkle their persons, nor incense to sweeten their services.

II Use. *This should caution all men from seeking salvation by the law*. Men, whether through ignorance or pride, are very apt to reject Christ, and to establish the righteousness of the law for their justification, therefore consider, 1. *The scripture opposeth the righteousness of God, and the righteousness of man as inconsistent in this business*, Phil. iii. 9. To seek justification by the law, is to make Christ a stumbling stone, Rom. ix. 30. 31, 32. 2. *The law as published on mount Sinia, was never a way to*

seek salvation by. It was delivered as a branch of the covenant of grace, and was a star to guide the people of Israel to Christ. 2. *That righteousness which must justify, must be so exact, that the justice of God can find no blemish in it.* Our best works are not such, they are tainted, Isa. lxiv. 6. Job. ix. 3, 15, 20. Our purest works needs Christ's righteousness to justify and pardon them. 4. *He that seeks salvation by the law makes the sacrifice of Christ either needless or insufficient,* Gal. ii. 21. If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain, for what need was there of Christ, if justification could be attained another way? Christ was sent to supply the defect of the law, which by our sinfulness was rendered weak, Rom. viii. 3, 4. 5. *The doctrine of justification by the law robs the soul of all solid comfort.* The righteousness of Christ establisheth the heart, but that of works leaves it perplexed, Rom. x. 6, 7. Here *Paul* puts a difference between the righteousness of the law, and of faith. The Papists that cry up works, cry down assurance. Seeing then that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, embrace and desire no other righteousness.

III. *Let the people of God draw comfort from this doctrine.* It's a comfort against the imperfection of our obedience; wherein we fall short, Christ doth supply us. Against all fear because of the rigour of the law. Conscience accuseth, the law impleads us; it will have obedience, or inflict wrath. This text is a city of refuge against all such accusations, it will stop the mouth of conscience, and answer all the objections of the law. Though we have not fulfilled it, yet Christ hath done it for us to the very uttermost.

SERMON XLV. ACTS 2—27.

“Neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy one to see corruption.”

THESE words are part of an excellent sermon preached by *Peter* to the Jews, in which he labors to convince them of their great sin in crucifying the Lord of glory. To set on this conviction, he proves him to be the Messiah promised to their fathers; this he does by asserting his resurrection. The testimony he brings to make this good, is from Psal.

xvi. 9, 10. *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.* This he applies to Christ, shewing that he was risen from the dead, that his body saw no corruption, and therefore was the Messiah. In the text we have two things; the title given to Christ. *The holy one of God*, and the thing asserted of Christ, that *God did not suffer his holy one to see corruption.* *Thy holy one.* There are two words in the Greek used for holiness, *osios* and *agios*. *Agios*, signifies separated from earth; things consecrated to God are separated from earth. *Osios*, which is here used, answers to the Hebrew word which signifies merciful, and is used Psl. xvi. 10: I shall follow the translation here used, for so the word is frequently translated, see Heb. xxvi. Joh. viii. 51. *If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death, i. e. he shall never suffer eternal death*; so in the text, not to see corruption, is not to suffer corruption. *Dāmascen* distinguishes a two-fold corruption. The one, the separation of the soul from the body, thus the body of Christ saw corruption, to deny this, were to deny the death of Christ. The other, corruption by putrefaction; a dead body is said to suffer corruption, when turned into the elements out of which it was taken. In this sense, the body of Christ saw no corruption. Here are two parts.

I. That Christ is the holy one of God.

II. That this holy one saw no corruption.

Doct. *That Christ is the holy one of God*; he is oft called *the holy one*, and *the holy one of God*, Acts iii. 14. ye denied the holy one, and Satan himself was forced to give him this testimony, Mar. i. 24. *I know thee, who thou art, the holy one of God*; yea, Christ is called holiness in the abstract, *That holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God*, Luk. i. 35. Christ may be considered either as God or man. Christ as God, is certainly the holy one; the Cherubims cry, Isa. vi. 3. *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts*, and the four beasts, Rev. iv. 8. *Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty*. Christ as God is holy in his will, in his word, in his works; is holy as the Father, and the spirit; is holy fundamental, essentially, operatively, exemplarily, perfectly and unchangeably; he that denies his holiness, denies his divinity. Of this holiness, this text doth not speak. Christ as man is the holy one of God, the holy Child Jesus, Acts iv. 27.

Against thy holy Child Jesus, &c. and v. 30. that signs and wonders may be done by the holy Child Jesus ; of this holiness, I shall handle three things.

I. Prove that Christ is the holy one of God.

II. Why it must needs be so.

III. How Christ's holiness differs from the holiness of saints

I. That Christ is holy ; this appears, 1. *From the manner of his conception.* The flesh of Christ was formed after an extraordinary manner. Though he was true and very man, yet he was not born as other men are ; he was made of the flesh of the Virgin *Mary* by the immediate work of the Holy Ghost, and being so formed, he could not but be purely holy, see Luk. i. 35. 2. *From his unspotted life.* His very enemies could not lay justly to his charge the least miscarriage ; he made this challenge, *Which of you convinceth me of sin,* Joh. viii. 46. His very enemies gave testimony, that he was a holy man. *Pilate* pronounceth him innocent, Mat. xxvii. 24. and *Judas* by his voluntary testimony, declared his holiness, Mat. xxvii. 4. and *Peter* in this sermon to his murderers, appeals to their consciences, as witnesses of his holiness, Acts ii. 22.

II. Why it must needs be so, appears. 1. *From that fulness of the spirit of holiness with which he was endued.* He was full of grace and truth, Joh. i. 14. The prophet said that God had annointed him with the spirit above his fellows, Psl. xlv. 7. It is impossible that a person so richly furnished with the spirit, should be unholy. 2. *His human nature was taken into personal union with the eternal word.* God manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16. That flesh that was to be the companion of God in such an unspeakable personal union, could not but be holy, Joh. i. 14. 3. *Christ was to be a pattern of holiness,* and therefore it was necessary that he should be holy, see 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22. He was a pattern not only for patience in his death, but for holiness in his life ; it is recorded in scripture, that all his members might lay it as a golden sampler before them, by which they ought to work ; he often commands his disciples, and in them all christians, to learn of him, Mat. xi. 29. 4. *He was to be offered up a sacrifice for sin,* and therefore must be holy. Blemished sacrifices are an abomination to God. It was forbidden in the law to offer the blind, lame, or halt in

sacrifice to God, see Mal. i. 7, 8. His offering and holiness are put together, see Heb. vii. 26.

III. How the holiness of Christ excels that of the saints.

1. *It is from himself.* Christ is self-holy, but all the roots of holiness which grow in the saints are of Christ's planting, Phil. i. 11. Had not Christ filled us with the fruits of righteousness, none of those fruits would ever have been found in us. *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruit,* Cant. iv. 16. *Of his fulness we have received grace for grace,* Joh. i. 16. but Christ's holiness is created in himself. The divinity fills the humanity with all holiness.

2. *The holiness of Christ is perfect.* The best saints are incompletely holy, they have but the perfection of parts, Christ hath the perfection of degrees, as well as of parts. *He was full of grace and truth,* Joh. i. 14. Saints have only the fulness of the vessel, Christ of the fountain; they the fulness of the branches, he of the root; they of sufficiency, he of redundancy. We have but a measure of the spirit, Rom. xii. 3. but the spirit was poured upon him without measure, Joh. iii. 34.

3. *The holiness of Christ is pure,* it is without mixture. Holiness in the best of Saints here is mixed; their unholiness is more than their holiness; but Christ was holy and separate from sinners, Heb. vii. 26. Saints have holiness with a body of death; Christ hath holiness without the least atom of unholiness.

4. *The holiness of Christ is undecaying,* he cannot lose one grain, his fulness dwells in him, Col. i. 19. Holiness keeps house in Christ. It's always full tide in this sea. Grace in Saints ebbs and flows; though they cannot lose all, yet they may lose much, 2 Cor. ix. 10. Saints are first babes in Christ, then young men, then old men, 1 Joh. ii. 13. and the Fathers may by sin become little children; but holiness in Christ knows neither languishing or consumption.

5. *Holiness in Christ is communicative.* He can make others holy by his holiness, Joh. i. 16. All that are holy, are so by the derivation of Christ's holiness; we are sanctified in Christ, 1 Cor. i. 1. we are holy in him, and by him. Neither saint nor angels can dispense their holiness to others. So many holy parents would not have unholy children if they could. Holy Paul can pray that the *Thessalonians* may be made holy, 1 Thes. v. 23. So can holy parents, but they cannot convey their holiness to them, but Christ can cause

his holiness to flow out to others. 6. *Holiness is in Christ by way of example*, it is the pattern, saith God, *Be ye holy, as I am holy*, 1 Pet. i. 16. so saith Christ, Mat. xi. 29. *Learn of me for I am meek*. The holiness of Christ is the standard. 7. *Holiness is in Christ originally*. He is holy from the womb. The best saint was born unholy, Psl. li. 5. *Behold I was shapen in iniquity, &c.* Christ is not under this confession, he had no original unholiness to stain his nature, Luk. i. 35.

I. For Exhortation. 1. *Let all take heed of reproaching and persecuting holiness*, It's usual with unholy men to revile saints for their holiness, 1 Pet. iv. 4. because such dare not pollute themselves with the common defilements of the world, they are scorned by unholy men, but they shall give account for such reviling. It's a proverb ripe in the mouths of ungodly men, *a young Saint, an old Devil*, *Erasmus* calls it, the Devil's proverb, and so it is, Prov. xxii. 6. Let such know, that when they blaspheme holiness, they blaspheme him who is the holy one. He that reproaches a subject for being like his King, or a child because like his Father, would be reputed a reproacher of such a King and Father. Holiness is the very image of Christ. To deface the King's picture, is to offer violence to his person: In all false religions, those that are most strict are most honoured. Why should it be a disgrace for any christian to walk exactly to the rules of his religion? Christ the holy one will reward holiness, though men condemn it. 2. *Let this be a motive to magnify Christ*, both in and for his holiness; holiness calls for praise; the little holiness in the saints is praiseworthy, though mingled with much unholiness, yet it shines like a diamond; how much more is Christ to be exalted for his holiness? Saints have admired God for his holiness, *Glorious in holiness*, Exod. xv. 11. and *Hannah* says, *There is none holy as the Lord*, 1 Sam. ii. 2. Christ's holiness is his excellency; he that remembers his holiness cannot forget to give him praises. 3. *Let this beget much love to Christ*. Holiness is the strongest loadstone of love, Psl. xvi. 3. Holiness is the beauty of a person, and this is the beauty of Christ. To love Christ for his holiness, is proof of the sincerity of our love; his kindness may move a carnal heart to some kind of love, but to love him for his holiness, is peculiar only to saints; those that seem to love him as a Saviour

may hate him as a holy one, Isa. xxx. 11. 4. *Take heed of using the name of Christ irreverently.* The holiness of his nature should teach reverence so his name, *Holy and reverend is his name*, Psl. cx. 9. Those that mention his name rashly, do not reverence him. It's usual for men on all petty occasions to cry out *O Christ! O Jesus!* we should not speak of him without an holy awe in our hearts. Things that are pure must not be touched without much heed. 5. *Worship Christ with holy worship*, Heb. i. 6. his greatness requires we should worship him; his holiness, that we should after a holy manner. Worship is holy, when we keep close to the holy institutions of Christ for matter and manner. The least mixture of human inventions defiles the worship, Exod. xx. 24, 25. That which man accounts a polishing, God accounts a polluting of his worship. *When the worshippers sanctify themselves for worship*, Heb. x. 22. Under the law the Priests must sanctify themselves, and the people. God appointed a laver to be set between the tabernacle and the altar, that the Sons of Aaron might wash themselves before they came to minister, Exo. xxx. 18, &c. He that brings his pollutions with him when he comes to worship, forgets the holiness of Christ: hands and hearts must be washed, when we come before so holy a one. 6. *Bring up your children in holiness.* Christ is called, *the holy Child Jesus*, Acts iv. 27, 30. Your Children that are holy are most like Christ, the holiest is the fairest child; the godly is the goodly child. 7. *Let those that are unholy labor for holiness.* Enough might be said to persuade men to think of holiness, it is the soul's riches, honor, life, and wisdom, Prov. iii. 13, &c. It's the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. The new man, Eph. iv. 24. and the best thing next to God, his Son, his spirit. What should we do that we may be holy. *Lament thine own unholiness by nature.* Behold thy face in the holy law, and see how thou comest short of it, Isa. lxiv. 6. this is a good step to holiness, Psl. li. 5. *Go to Christ for holiness*, beg his blood, and get others to beg for thee; we read of the *blood of sprinkling*, Heb. xii. 24. The promises of grace may encourage thee, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. *Wait upon sanctifying ordinances*, chiefly upon the ministry of the word; Christ makes men holy by his word, Joh. xv. 2. This is the seed of grace, 1 Pet. i. 23. the golden stamp in the hands of Christ, with which he prints holiness upon the soul; he that does thus, and is weary of

sin, shall not die without true holiness. 8. *You that are holy increase in holiness.* 2 Cor. vii. 1. we have but a little yet, if we desire not more, it's a sign we have none; but the more holiness you have, the more you will honour and be like him; a true saint would be, if it were possible, another Christ for holiness. 9. *Take heed of pretended holiness.* Hypocritical holiness is the worst unholiness, and shall have the heaviest punishment, Luk. xx. 47. Hell is made for hypocrites, Mat. xxiv. 51. 10. *Increase your acquaintance with Christ,* get nearer to him, delight in his company; by being much with him, you will receive more holy influences from him.

II. For Consolation to all saints. 1. *That Christ will own your holiness,* he cannot deny himself, and this is himself, if there be a spark of it in a dung-hill of corruption, Christ will acknowledge it, Rev. ii. 6. 2. *That Christ will preserve and increase your holiness.* Self-preservation is natural to all creatures; holiness is Christ's image, self-preservation will move him to preserve and increase thy holiness, 1 Thes. v. 23. The holy one will bless means for the increase of holiness. 3. *That Christ will reward your holiness,* all holy services shall be rewarded by him, Mat. xxv. 35, &c. 4. *That he will suppress unholiness.* Bless God for making you holy; he made you like his Son, by making you holy; he makes many rich, great and beautiful, whom he will never make holy. In making you holy ones, he hath made you truly great.

II. Doct. *That the dead body of Christ was preserved from corruption,* he truly died, his soul and body were separated, he was buried, and continued three days and nights under Death, but was preserved from putrefaction. Here consider.

I. What is comprehended in this expression, *not seeing corruption,* it implies, 1. *That the dead body of Christ did not suffer that putrefaction which other men pass under.* The bodies of all become corrupt, and are resolved into their first elements. It was an article of *Job's* saith, that the worms would destroy his skin and his Job xix. 26. Saith *Martha* to Christ concerning *Lazarus* Lord, *by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days,* Joh. x. 39. but the dead body of Christ did not pass

under this condition; though he lay in the grave eight and thirty hours, yet he was not tainted, the divine power embalmed his body, that no putrefaction took hold of it. 2. *That the dead body of Christ was raised out of the grave, see v. 24.* God hath raised him up, having loosed the pains of death, and then he cites this passage out of *David* to confirm this doctrine. *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption,* and v. 30, 31. he fully opens this text, shewing that it must be applied to Christ, and not to *David*, so the meaning of the text is, that God will, by his power, preserve the body of Christ from being tainted in the grave, and will raise him up from the grave. That Christ was raised, is proved from his many appearances after his resurrection; he appeared to *Mary Magdalen*, Mar. xvi. 9. to *Mary Magdalen* and the other *Mary*, Mat. xxviii. 9. to the two Disciples going to *Emmaus* Luk. xxiv. 13. to *Peter* alone, 1 Cor. xv. 5. to all the Disciples except *Thomas*, Joh. xx. 19. eight days after to *Thomas*, Joh. xx. 26. to seven of the Disciples together, as they were fishing, Joh. xxi. 1. to *James* alone, 1 Cor. xv. 7. to all the Disciples in a mountain, whither he had commanded them to come, Mat. xxviii. 16. to above five hundred brethren at once, 1 Cor. v. 6. and to all the Apostles on the mount of *Olivet*, from whence he ascended in their sight up to heaven, Acts i, 9, 10.

II. Why it was thus. 1. Why his body was preserved from all corruption. *There was no necessity of such corruption.* Christ did by dying discharge our debt, and it was not needful that he should undergo any further degree of humiliation; when he died, he said, *It is finished*, Joh. xix. 30. If it be said, what need then of his burial? I answer, that it might be evidenced that he was truly dead. Those that pretended, that his Disciples came by night and stole him away, might with more color have denied his death, if he had not been buried, hence there was reason why he should be buried, but none that his body should putrify. *It was uncomely that his body should corrupt.* Though he took the human nature, yet he did not assume human diseases, as lameness, blindness, &c. because these appertain not to the nature, but to the person. Christ took not the person, but the nature of man only, and it was not fit that he should submit to personal infirmities, which proceed from

private causes and particular judgments of God; so it was not comely that the body of Christ should be tainted in the least. 3. *The speediness of his resurrection would not permit such corruption.* Christ rose again the third day; we see the dead bodies of ordinary men keep sweet for a longer time than Christ lay in his grave; Peter therefore gives this as a reason why his body saw no corruption, because his person was not left in the grave.

II. Why the body of Christ was raised, this was necessary. 1. *To make full proof of his God-head,* his dying declared him to be true man, his resurrection to be very God, for none can raise themselves from the grave, but Christ quickened his own dead body, Joh. ii. 19. his resurrection is a proof of his divinity, Rom. i. 4. 2. *To confirm our faith in the satisfaction he made to God by his death,* had he not risen, there could be no good ground to believe in him; Paul triumphs in this, Rom. viii. 34. Nor could there have been security given that the debt was discharged: Christ is said to be justified in the spirit, 1 Tim. iii. 16 he is declared to be him by whom we are justified. This is applied by many interpreters to the resurrection of Christ; God by taking him from the grave, did testify that it is he who is the Lord our righteousness. 3. *That he might perform for his elect what he was to do.* Christ was to be their intercessor, as well as sacrifice, he was to send the comforter, and by his intercession to apply to his elect all the benefits procured by his death; he could not have done this, if he had always lain in the grave. 4. *To shew the fulness of his victory over death.* He was a captive to death while in the grave, but when he arose, he was a conqueror. Christ by death, did overcome death, and the Devil, Heb. ii. 14, 15. this he declared by his resurrection. Paul speaking of the saint's victory over death, applies it to this 1 Cor. xv. 37.

The Uses, 1. From Christ seeing no corruption, it shews *the dear love of God to Christ.* He did by almighty power, prevent the corruption of his dead body, it had in it the natural principles of corruption, yet God hindered the working of those causes. *What difference there was between Christ's dead body, and the dead bodies of others.* The bodies of men die and putrify. Christ though he saw death, saw no corruption; as his living body was without sin, so his dead body was without rotteness.

II. For the latter, *Christ's resurrection*, it teacheth the certainty of the *saints' resurrection*; it is a pledge of our resurrection. *The first fruits of them that sleep*, 1 Cor. xv. 20, we are raised together with Christ, Eph. ii. 6, and Paul argues the certainty of ours from the resurrection of Christ, 1 Cor. vi. 14. Though our bodies shall see corruption, yet, shall they be raised up as sure as Christ's was raised. The wicked shall be raised by Christ as judge, the saints by him as their redeemer. *This should strengthen our faith in Christ*. The primitive christians used to salute one another with this, *Christus resurrexit*. *If Christ were not risen, our faith were in vain*, 1 Cor. xv. 17. The denial of this, is the overturning of all the christian faith, but this truth is the establishment of the christian doctrine. Believers may be sure their debts are paid, because Christ is raised up. *Stand fast in the faith of this doctrine*. The Jews deny it, and so are hardened; the absurd excuse which they put into the soldier's mouths, blinds their eyes, *His Disciples came by night while we slept, and stole him away*, Mat. xxviii. 13. How did they know what was done when they were asleep? If we falter in this doctrine, all christianity is laid in the dust. *Make an holy improvement of this resurrection of Christ. Let it raise up your affections to a spiritual life*. Lie not in the grave of sin now Christ is risen, Rom. vi. 4. Mind the world less, and heaven more, Col. iii. 1. *Let it set you above the fear of the grave*. Death is a terrible enemy; Christ by lying in the grave hath sweetened it, and by rising hath conquered it. Death could not keep him prisoner, and shall never any that are his. *Take heed of putting Christ to death again*. The Jews endeavoured to put Lazarus to death again, Joh. xii. 10. Christ though he can never die again properly, yet may in a kind be put to death, *Crucify him afresh*, Heb. vi. 6. Every sin nails Christ to the cross again. Take heed of sin, it pierces Christ to the heart. Christ's resurrection should teach us to die to sin, Rom. vi. 9, &c. *Comfort yourselves in the assurance of salvation*. His resurrection proves all is blotted out, it is a wide door of hope to a believer, 1 Pet. i. 3. It shews all the enemies of your salvation are overcome, that whatsoever may keep you out of heaven is removed, that the law is satisfied, that God is pacified, and that all the glory of heaven is procured. It's an anchor to keep the hope of salvation stable. *It may confirm our hopes in the church's resurrection*. Not only from

the grave, but all other troubles. There will be a resurrection, after a passion day, Hos. vi. 1, 2. It's an allusion to Christ's resurrection, which is a pledge of ours, not only from the grave, but from all troubles. While the pilot lives, the ship shall not sink.

SERMON XLVI. HEB 13—10..

"We have an altar."

THE scope of *Saint Paul* here is, to take off the scattered Hebrews from the Jewish worship, and to encourage them in the christian doctrine which they had embraced; he saw they were in danger of apostatizing, partly by persecution, and partly by false teachers, and therefore he writes to confirm them in the faith; this he doth, 1. By setting before them the dignity of Christ, above *Moses*. 2. The excellency of Christ's Priest-hood, above the Levitical Priest-hood. 3. The example of other believers, who had endured as much as they could suffer. 4. The danger of apostacy. In v. 9. he resumes the exhortation, *Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines*. One great argument here is in the text, viz.—they would deprive themselves of all benefit by Christ, if they made defection to Judaism; *We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle*, see also Gal. v. 2, 3. Observe by what Christ is represented, an altar; and the loss those procure to themselves who observe levitical ordinances, they have no right to Christ, nor any of his benefits. 1. *We have an altar*. Altar is taken in scripture either properly or metaphorically. Properly it is that upon which sacrifices were offered. *Noah* builded an altar, and sacrificed upon it to God, Gen. viii. 20. *Abraham* builded several, Gen. xii. 7. c. xiii. 4, 18. c. xxii. 9. An altar metaphorically, is used divers ways; for the sacrifice offered upon it, 1 Cor. ix. 13. for the levitical service, 1 Kings xix. 10. Where by throwing down the altars of God, he means the forsaking of God's worship, 1 Cor. x. 18. For the worship of God in general, Ps. xxvi. 6. when nations turn and worship him, they are said to set up an altar, Isa. xix. 19. It is taken for Christ himself, as in the text; for it is not a material altar, but a metaphorical one.

Doct. *That Christ is the christian's spiritual altar, see also v. 12.* Christ is often represented in scripture by an altar, Rev. vi. 9. 'Tis in his bosom the marriage feast, Rev. viii. 3. He is both the angel of the covenant, and the altar.

I. Why Christ is called an altar. 1. *To represent his sacrifice for the sins of the elect.* His human nature was offered upon the cross, as an expiation for sin, Heb. ix. 14. hence Paul calls him an altar. Christ indeed was priest, sacrifice and altar. As man, he was the sacrifice, as God and man, the priest, as God, the altar; whereby the human nature was sanctified as an atonement for sin, and upon which, as an altar, it was sacrificed. 2. *To shew that he was the person typified by legal altars.* There were two altars, one of burnt offerings, or the brazen altar, because overlaid with brass, Exod. xxi. 1 to 6. the other of incense, Exod. xxx. init. called the golden altar, because overlaid with gold. In divers respects both were types of Christ. *All the sacrifices were offered upon the altar of burnt offering, and all the incense was burnt upon the altar of incense.* All our duties are done in Christ's name, all our prayers, which are our spiritual incense, are made through his mediation, Heb. xiii. 15. God would have abhorred sacrifices, if not offered upon the altar he commanded; or incense, if not burnt upon his own altar, Josh. xxii. 29. God bathes all duties not done in his Son's name. *The altar did sanctify the sacrifice,* Mat. xxiii. 29. Exod. xxix. 37. Jesus doth sanctify all our duties which are in themselves unholy. *The altar was a place of refuge.* Men fled to the horns of the altar, 1 Kings i. 1, 51. God would not have his altar a refuge for flagitious men, Exod. xxi. 14. but in some cases it was a refuge. Jesus is the believers only refuge, it is through him that God is merciful to sinners. *There was but one altar for sacrifice, and one for incense.* 'Tis by Christ alone that God and the sinner are made one; only one mediator, 1 Tim. ii. 5. *The horns of the altar must be sprinkled with blood,* Exod. xxx. 10. All our duties must be not only perfumed with Christ's incense, but dipt in his blood, else they cannot be accepted of God.

II. How Christ exceeds all other altars. 1. *He is both the altar and sacrifice.* The altar and the incense were two things, here they are but one. 2. *Other altars were but for a time.* It was once a sin to throw down altars, 1 Kings

xix, 10. but now it is a sin to erect them, for this altar abides for ever. 3. *The tabernacle altars were but of small dimension, that for burnt offering was five cubits long, five broad, and three high, Exod. xxvii. 1. The altar of incense was a cubit long, one broad, and two high, Exod. xxx. 2. But this altar is of infinite dimension. The God-head of Christ fills heaven and earth. 4. The altars under the law were of corruptible matter, of shittim wood, and are now not to be found; but this altar is incorruptible. The God-head is eternal, and the man-head never did, nor shall see corruption. 5. The altars under the law contracted defilement from the pollutions of the people. Therefore was the altar of incense hallowed by the High-Priest upon the day of atonement, Lev. xvi. 18, 19. but Christ needs no cleansing; he hallows men, men cannot sanctify him. 6. The altars under the law were fixed. In the tabernacle and temple, it was unlawful to remove them to any other place, but this may be put up in every place; sacrifice may be offered, and incense burnt every where, Joh. iv. 20, 21. 1 Tim. ii. 8.*

The Uses. - 1. *It confutes the Papists who erect material altars.* This is in effect to deny Christ, the only altar christians have; 'Tis to introduce Jewish worship, which by the coming of Christ is abolished. Christians have the table of the Lord, as *Augustine* calls it, or as *Chrysostom* calls it, the *holy table*, but altars and sacrifices they have none but Christ, who by one offering of himself, hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified, Heb. x. 14. 2. *It shews that the christian worship, is far more glorious than the Jewish.* The scripture prefers it before the Jewish, especially in the *Hebrews*. We have all what they had, yea, in a more glorious way; their types and shadows, we have in substance, we have the true High Priest, the true altar of burnt offering, and of incense. Whatever glory their worship had, we have the same in a more glorious manner, Col. ii. 10. 3. *Make use of Christ as that altar by which your services are accepted by God.* Believers under the law, had but one altar for all their sacrifices; but one on which to burn all their incense. It was a great sin in *Jero-boam* to erect two altars in *Dan* and *Beersheba*. Christians are to make use of no altar but Christ. To make angels and saints mediators, is to make more altars than one, which God abhors. All our prayers must be offered upon this altar alone, or God will not

accept of them, Col. iii. 17. Heb. xiii. 15. 4. *It's a singular comfort to such as have an interest in Christ.* All the sacrifices, prayers, praises and duties presented to God by him, shall find acceptance. He is God's golden altar, and therefore the fire of God shall come down to burn all the sacrifices presented by him. The altar under the law did ceremonially sanctify the gift, Mat. xxiii. 19. but this doth truly sanctify both the sacrifice and the offerer. Your poorest, meanest services, performed in faith, shall for Christ's sake be accepted of God. 5. *Bless God for this altar.* There would have been no acceptable way of offering without it. It was a singular mercy to Israel, that God did erect altars for their use; far greater, that he hath given us his Son for our altar. 6. *Let us on this altar sacrifice ourselves to God,* Rom. xii. 1. Soul and body are God's many ways, through Christ let them be offered to God in faith and new obedience.

SERMON XLVII. 1 COR. 5.---7.

"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

PAUL sharply rebukes the church of *Corinth* for their neglect to punish scandalous sinners, and directs them how to redress offences. Reprehension is handled v. 1, 2. from thence note. 1. What heinous sins may creep into the church of Christ. 2. A church doth not presently cease to be a true church because of great offences. 3. God's people are not presently to separate from the communion of the church, though great sins be found in it. 4. The tolerating of scandalous sins in particular members, is a thing very displeasing to Christ. 5. The falls of members of churches are a just cause of mourning to the whole society. Direction is from v. 3. to the end of the chapter. In this we have, *The spiritual remedy*, v. 3, 4, 5. this is *excommunication*, the fountain of it is Christ, the instrument to dispense it, the church; the form of it, the delivering of the offender to Satan, the casting him out of the communion of the church; the end of it, the destruction of sin, and the salvation of the sinner. The reasons urged for this remedy are many, see v.

6, to the end of the chapter. The danger such scandal would expose the church unto, v. 6. The advantage such expulsion would bring to the church, v. 7, 8. The church would be more holy and orderly. The former counsel given them about avoiding communion with scandalous persons, v. 9, was only in reference to such as were members of the church; because over such only the church hath cognizance, v. 10, &c which he concludes with a reinforcement of his counsel about this offender, v. 13. that they would by excommunication put him from among themselves. *Paul* having set out the danger of the church by the presence of such sinners, makes an hortatory digression, *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump.* This he presseth from the care of the Jews in putting away leaven when they celebrated their passover. Christians should be as careful to put away their sinful leaven, for they have a passover to observe as well as the Jews. Note, The person, *Christ*. The thing, *our passover*. The word passover, *pascha* in Greek, *pesech* in Hebrew, oomes from *pasach* to pass by, or to leap over; it takes its name from the gracious act of God, in causing the destroying angel to pass over the houses of Israel, when he smote the first born of *Egypt*. It hath two very usual significations. 1. That solemn anniversary feast, observed by Israel seven days, as a memorial of their deliverance out of *Egypt*, Lev. xxiii. 5. 2. The lamb slain by Israel in that feast, and afterward eaten in their several families, Exo. xii 11. In this latter sense we understand the text, because mention is made of sacrificing. Doct. *That Christ is the christian's passover.* Note.

- I. That the passover typified Christ.
 - II. How that passover did typify Christ.
 - III. How Christ differs from that passover
- I. *The passover was a lively type of Christ.* Divines generally assert this truth. *Bucanus* saith, that it did signify four things. The preservation of Israel from the destroying angel. The deliverance of the church from Egyptian bondage. The spiritual freedom of the elect from spiritual bondage, by the blood of Christ. The spiritual eating of Christ. I shall by four arguments prove that Christ was prefigured by the passover. 1. *Christ is frequently called*

by that name, Joh. i. 29, 36. 1 Pet. i. 19. *A lamb without blemish, and without spot*, because he it was, that was prefigured by that lamb which was slain and eaten in the passover by Israel. 2. *The Jews ate of the same spiritual meat which Christians do under the gospel*, Cor. x. 4, 5. His scope is to prove, that the Jewish sacraments were the same for substance with the christian, because their passover which was a sacrament or nourishment, prefigured the very same Christ who is our nourishment, under the gospel. 3. *The evangelist expounds the Paschal lamb to be a type of Christ*. Holy men who were infallibly guided by the spirit, knew the meaning of all the legal types, Joh. xix. 36. applies the Paschal lamb to Christ. The soldiers brake not his legs, as they did the malefactors, that the scripture might be fulfilled, *A bone of him shall not be broken*. Scripture nowhere saith those words of Christ expressly, but of the Paschal lamb, Exo. xii. 46. John knowing that that lamb was a type of Christ, applies what was commanded concerning it to Christ. 4. *Christ when he was to offer up himself a sacrifice, did abolish the passover, as that now accomplished in his death*, Luk. xxii. 14, to 20. We here learn, that the passover, and the Lord's supper signify in substance the same thing. That the passover did typify Christ. *With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer*. That Christ did fulfil all things prefigured of him in the passover.

II. The resemblance between Christ and the paschal lamb

1. *The passover was a lamb*, Exo. xii. 8. it is said at v. 5. they might take either a lamb or a kid. Some interpreters think, that it was indifferent to use either a lamb, or for want of a lamb, a kid; but the opinion of Junius is more probable, that this liberty of taking a kid was only granted for the first passover, and that afterward they used only a lamb, and therefore is Christ so often called a lamb. Now a lamb was fit to be a type of Christ, because it is *patient and meek*, it suffers itself not only to be shorn, but butchered, without any noise. The swine cries, but the lamb is silent. Christ was more meek than any man, Mat. xi. 29. he suffered revilings, stripes, buffetings, yea, death itself, without the least impatient complaining, 1 Pet. ii. 23. and Isa. liii. 7. *A lamb is harmless*, it suffers wrong, but does none. Innocent persons are called sheep, 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. Christ when on

earth, was innocent and harmless; many took offence at him, but he never gave any just cause of offence to any, Heb. vii. 26. *The lamb is profitable*; the flesh is good for food, the fleece for clothing, and Christ is very profitable, his words, deeds, sufferings and righteousness, are very profitable thereby is justice satisfied, and the sinner made righteous.

II. *The qualifications required in this lamb did clearly represent Christ.* Four things were required about the paschal lamb which had clear reference to Jesus. *It must be without blemish*, Exod. xii. 5. The Hebrew word is *Tamim*, the Greek reads it, *perfect*. If there had been any blemish, God would have abhorred it, Lev. xx. 21, 22. Christ was made like unto us in all things, save only in sin, he was *holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and undefiled*, Heb. vii. 26. *A lamb without blemish, and without spot*, 1 Pet. i. 19. He that was to be an expiatory sacrifice, that was to wash away the spots of many, that was to communicate holiness to others, must needs be holy and without spot himself. *It must be a male*, Exod. xii. 5. *Zacor*, that is, the stronger and more excellent sex, and the very best is to be offered up to God. Hence is that complaint, Mal. i. 14. it signifies a perfect sacrifice, and is opposed to what is corrupt, weak, feeble, lame, or defective, this represents the perfection of Christ. It was necessary that our Saviour should be strong, he was to bear a heavy burden, even the wrath of God, to grapple with principalities and powers, Isa. lii. 12. and therefore it was fit he should be a male for strength; he was to be king, prophet and priest of his church, and had he not been a male, he could not have executed any of these offices. As he hath the meekness of the lamb, so he hath the strength of the lion, Rev. v. 5. *It must be a lamb of a year old*, Exo. xii. 5. it was not required a complete year, for it might be offered up, though not fully a year old. The Jews from Lev. xxii. 27. hold, that it might be used for the passover after eight days old, till it was a year old, but if above a year old, it was not to be used. A lamb is in its prime the first year of its age, and Christ was sacrificed in the flower of his age, in his four and thirtieth year, the very prime of a man's life. *The lamb was to be taken out of the Israelitish flocks*, Exo. xii. 5. Christ was taken out of the fold of Israel; he was of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh; he was born amongst them, amongst them he lived, and by them he was put to death.

III. *Christ was prefigured by the paschal lamb in its usefulness*, he serves the church for the same uses which the lamb served the Jews. *For food*, the several families fed upon it. Christ is useful for food; there is no other food for souls, *he is the manna, the bread of God, which gives life to the world.* *His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed*, Joh. vi. 55. The Jews had other meat beside the paschal lamb, but christians have no other meat for their souls but Jesus, Exod. xii. 13. Without the blood of the lamb, they had no ground of defence; it is by Jesus that we are delivered and preserved from the wrath of God, 1 Thess. i. ult. Christ is a defender as well as a Saviour, Isa. xxxii. 2. *For reconciliation*. The passover was a sacrifice, as well as a sacrament, the sprinkling of its blood reconciled to God, 2 Chron. xxxv. 11. Now without a sacrifice there is no reconciliation. Jesus is our reconciliation, Col. i. 21, 22. The sacrifices were reconciliatory and pacificatory, only as they did represent him, by whose blood God and man are made one.

IV. *The preparation of the lamb for use did figure Christ. It must be separated from the flock*, v. 5. This prefigured the separation of Jesus. *He was set apart by the determinate counsel of God*. God from eternity took him out of the fold, and ordained him for sacrifice for our sins, Acts ii 23. It was Christ's will to be offered up, he was *a lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, 1 Pet. i. 20. Though manifested in the last times, he was fore-ordained from eternity. *He was set apart in time by his extraordinary conception and birth*. He was conceived in the womb of a spotless virgin, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, Luk. i. 35. *He was separated from all the rest of the flock in the sinlessness of his nature*. All the rest are stained from their birth, but Christ was separated from all pollution, Heb. vii. 26. *He was separated in the union of the two natures*. The human and divine were hypostatically united in his person; very God and very man, Joh. i. 14. None have this honor but Christ; others are made partakers of the holy qualities of the divine nature. 2 Pet. i. 4. but he hath the essence of the God-head dwelling in him. *He was separated from all the rest in his installment into his office*. The immediate voice of God proclaimed him king priest, and prophet of his church, Mat. iii. 16, 17. *The*,

paschal lamb must be kept alive four days, from the tenth to the fourteenth day of the same month, Exod. xii. 6. This was the rite peculiar only to the first passover, by this rite two things were prefigured of Christ. *His continuance in the world.* He was not presently to die as soon as baptized. Christ executed his public ministry about four years after his baptism; he had first to preach the gospel for a time, and then to seal the truths delivered by him with his blood; his death was not according to the will of man, but the appointment of God; his enemies, though they made many attempts to take away his life, could not prevail till the hour appointed of the Father, his time was not yet come. *The particular time of his death.* The lamb was slain on the fourteenth of the first month. Jesus suffered about the same time, he was betrayed the same night in which he eat the passover, and the next day suffered. *The paschal lamb must be killed*, Exod. xii. 6. It did not die a natural, but a violent and bloody death; hereby was typified the death of Christ. A necessity there was for the death of Christ, the violated law must be satisfied. Sin could not be done away without blood, Heb. ix. 22. and thus it was necessary that the blood of Christ should be shed. The promise of heaven could not be purchased without the death of the mediator, Heb. ix. 15. All the sacrifices which prefigured the death of Christ, made it necessary that he should be slain. The Devil and death could not have been destroyed without the death of Christ, Heb. ii. 14. hence all Christ did and suffered would have fallen short of redemption, if he had not died. *The paschal lamb was to be killed in the evening*, Exo. xii. 6. in Hebrew, *between the two evenings*. The Jews divided the day into four parts; the first from sun-rising to nine in the forenoon, their third hour; the second from nine to twelve, their sixth hour; the third from twelve to three, their ninth hour; the fourth from three to the sun-setting, now between three o'clock their first Evening and the sun-setting; their other evening they killed the passover. This did prefigure that Christ should suffer in the evening of the world, the last times or last days, Heb. i 2. because God hath in these days spoke his whole mind, and hath settled a constant course of worship, which he will never abrogate. Now in these times, Christ was offered up, Heb. ix. 26. *To set out the very time of the day when Christ should be crucified*, he was crucified about the time that the lamb was killed,

about nine in the morning, the time when they offered up their morning sacrifice, and he died about three in the afternoon, the time of the evening sacrifice, when the passover used to be killed, which scripture calleth the ninth hour, Mat. xxvii. xlvi. 50. *About the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, &c.. The paschal lamb must be roasted with fire,* Exo. xii. 9. they were forbidden to eat it raw, or to boil or bake it; this represented Christ's sufferings; he was nailed to the cross, he was pierced with the spear, the iron entered into his soul. Nothing sets out God's wrath as fire doth, and therefore it is so often compared to fire. *It represented what excellent nourishment Christ is to the soul.* Meat roasted is accounted the stronger and more delicate food. Christ is not only food, but the most delicate and strengthening food; the very best of all meats in every kind, Isa. xxv. 6. When he is compared to bread it is manna; when to flesh it is to fatlings; when to wine, it is the wine on the less well refined. *To shew that nothing ought to be mingled with Christ.* Boiled meat is mixed with water, or baked is mixed with flour. Christ allows nothing to be mingled with him, either for justification or salvation, 1. Cor. ii. 2. They that mingle the law with Christ for justification, or compound man's merit and Christ's satisfaction together, or mingle the intercession of angels with his mediation, eat the paschal lamb not roasted with fire, but either baked or boiled, which is a breach of God's institution. Christ is every way sufficient in himself for all the concerns of the soul; he that mingles any thing with him, makes Christ ineffectual, Gal. v. 4. *The paschal lamb must be roasted whole,* Exo. xii. 9. this signifies, that he suffered the wrath of God in his whole man, both in his soul and body; he is called a *man of sorrows*, Isa. liii. 3. That expression shews the variety, greatness, and universality of his sufferings; his body suffered, his head was crowned with thorns, his hands and feet nailed, his side pierced, and his soul suffered, for he cried out, *My soul is sorrowful even unto death*, Mat. xxvi. 38, he redeemed our souls as well as our bodies, therefore Christ made his soul an offering for sin, as well as his body, Isa. liii. 10. Desertion is properly called soul-suffering, and that kind of suffering Christ endured, Mat. xxvii. 46. *That all Christ must be applied*; we are commanded to apply him wholly, Rom. xiii. 14. All Christ is necessary and profitable; he is as necessary in his kingly and prophetic offices,

as in his priestly. A divided Christ is no Christ, 1 Cor. i. 20. He that will not have Christ for wisdom, shall never have him for righteousness, sanctification or redemption; he is wholly tendered, and must be universally received. *They must not break a bone of the paschat lamb*, Exo. xii. 46. That which was hereby prefigured, was the providence of God, in not permitting the legs of Christ to be broken, Job. xix. 36. The reasons for this are, *that it might appear that he was not a malefactor*, though reckoned amongst transgressors, yet he was no transgressor, and therefore no such reproach must be done to his body. *Because his body was shortly to be raised a glorious body. To let believers know that God hath a care of the dead bodies of his saints. To let his people see that he will not permit enemies to act any thing against him but by his determination.* God can limit the rage of the bloodiest foe, Ps. lxxvi. 10. *To shew his strength was not broken by death.* The legs are usually put for strength Ps. cxlvii. 10. Though Christ was for a time under the dominion of death, yet was not his strength diminished.

V. *The lamb did typify Christ in the use made of the blood.* Here are three things. *The blood was saved in a vessel*, Exo. xii. 22. This did typify, *The preciousness of Christ's blood*, 1 Pet. i. 19. every drop of it is infinitely of more value than a sea of worldly delights, it's precious in the dignity of his person; not man only, but God, *the blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. and precious in its effects; justification, remission, reconciliation, salvation, are the fruits of Christ's blood. All our privileges are the price of this blood. God thinks himself well paid by the blood of his Son. *That God would not lose the blood of his Son*, he will make good to the elect whatsoever is purchased for them by it, he will not lose his design, in shedding this blood. Whatsoever you can find settled upon you by virtue of Christ's blood, you may conclude shall be really made good. The covenant is sealed with his blood, and therefore christians need not doubt its privileges shall be, 2 Cor. i. 20. The covenant is called, *the New Testament in Christ's blood*, and because it's laid in his blood, it shall to a tittle be made good, Heb. ix. 13, 23. The necessity of the shedding of this blood, else the Testament had been of no force. The certainty of the accomplishment of all covenant privileges, by Christ's blood being shed, and preserved with so much care, is a sufficient security of

the ratification of the whole bargain. *It did typify how careful the church should be to preserve the blood of Christ from profanation.* They must not pour it on the earth, but preserve it in a bason, for sacred uses. God would not have it trodden under foot. How was the church of Corinth punished for profaning it in the sacrament? 1 Cor. xi. 30. *The blood was to be sprinkled.* In the first passover it was sprinkled on the two side posts, and on the upper door posts of the houses, Exo. xii. 7. And in the after passovers, it was sprinkled on the altar, 2 Chron. xxxv. 11. This represented five things worthy our observation. *That the blood of Christ must be applied by all who expect benefit by it.* 'Tis not the blood shed, but applied, that is beneficial to the soul, 1 Pet. i. 2. it's called *the blood of sprinkling*, Heb. xii. 24. Christ's blood hath no health in it, if not applied to the conscience; it is spiritual physic, and doth not cure if not taken down, This is the reason why it saves one and not another; the one sprinkles it upon his conscience, the other makes no application. It's a great undervaluing of Christ's blood, not to make application of it to the soul, We are *to put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. xiii. 14. Christ's blood hath no spiritual virtue, unless it be taken and digested. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* *That the blood of Christ must be applied to every faculty of the soul*, it must be sprinkled on the two side posts, and on the upper post. The whole man must be washed in Christ's blood, for every part is unclean, and therefore must be purified. What is said of the state of *Judah*, that it is wholly polluted, Isa. i. 6. is as true of men by nature; the leprosy of sin hath overspread every part, *the body of death*, Rom. vii. 24. *The old man*, Eph. iv. 22. *The body of sin*, Rom. vi. 6. All these phrases shew the universality of corruption. Now if every part be filthy, all hath need of sprinkling; and besides, a believer is to resemble Christ in every part, and therefore must be sprinkled in every part. We are commanded *to yield our members servants to righteousness unto holiness*, Rom. vi. 19. not one but every member. Christ hath redeemed the whole man, and therefore the whole man is to serve him. *Glorify God in your souls and bodies, and spirits, which are God's*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. The whole man is to be consecrated by obedience to Christ, and therefore is to be washed with this blood; he that is not wholly washed is not washed at all. If the Devil and sin be allowed to keep

possession in one part, he is not cast out of possession in any part. *That the church receives great benefits by this blood,* it is of great use to the believer. The sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb, did shew that God was reconciled to Israel, and by the sprinkling of Christ's blood upon the soul, is God and the soul at peace, Col. i. 20. Had not the lamb been slain, and the blood sprinkled, the enmity between God and man had not been done away. *It did shew the ratification of the covenant.* And it is by the blood of Christ that the covenant of grace is confirmed, it is called the *New Testament in Christ's blood*, Luk. xxii. 20. because ratified in his blood. *The passover did signify the justification of their persons.* Remission of sin is only by the blood of Christ, Rom. iii. 25. Without shedding blood there is no remission, Heb. ix. 22. Christ's blood speaks better things than the blood of *Abel*, Heb. xii. 24. that cried for vengeance, but this for mercy. Pardon is the price of blood. *The blood of the passover shewed the sanctification of the heart* by its sprinkling the posts of the door were washed, and all our sanctification is by the blood of Christ, Heb. ix. 13, 14. *Paul* puts pardon and purity together, as the genuine fruits of the sprinkling of Christ's blood, Heb. x. 22. *The sprinklings of the blood of the passover was for Israel's preservation,* By this, did the destroying Angel pass over their houses, when he smote the rest, Exo. xii. 13. Our preservation from eternal wrath, is through the precious blood of Christ alone, by this is purchased our freedom from eternal damnation, and our right to eternal salvation. As the sprinkled houses were sure that the destroyer could not meddle with them, so may the sprinkled consciences, that the wrath of God shall pass from them. *By the sprinkling of the passover on the outside the door,* was signified that saints must be holy outwardly, as well as inwardly. If Christ's blood be in the heart, it will shew itself in the conversation; he that hath not the door posts sprinkled, never had his heart yet sprinkled; we must be outwardly as well as inwardly holy, Mat. v. 16. The spirit of God renews the life as well as the heart. Inward holiness commends us to God, but outward to men. He that is inwardly holy, hath a good conscience towards God, but he that is outwardly and inwardly holy, hath a good conscience towards God and man. Outward holiness edifies others more than inward holiness: We must have Christ's blood in our hearts, because God sees us; and on

the posts of the door, because men sees us. A holy heart, and a holy life must go together, and then we are christians indeed. *The blood was to be sprinkled on the two side posts and on the upper post, but not on the threshold,* because that was not so obvious. God useth likely means, Acts xxvii. 31. God could have preserved the ship, though all the mariners had deserted it, but he will have rational means used; to teach us not to tread under foot the blood of Christ. God honors Christ's blood, and will not have it exposed to contempt. Those in a spiritual sense pour Christ's blood on the ground who apply its benefits to profane men, abiding so; God hath provided gospel comforts for humbled sinners, Mat. xi. 28. But to tender salvation to the impenitent, so continuing, is to sprinkle the blood of Christ upon the threshold *Those that give his blood in the sacrament to the scandalous,* 1 Cor. x. 21. You cannot do this without very considerable sin, Ezek. xxiii. 38, 30. that complaint of God is very much to be laid to heart, Ezek. xxii. 26, If a separation must be made in any thing, it must be in this ordinance. *The instrument for sprinkling of the blood was a bunch of hyssop.* Exo. xii. 22. Hyssop was a herb commonly used in the legal sprinklings, Heb. ix. 19. *That man hath nothing of his own wherewith to sprinkle Christ's blood.* Alas! we have neither a vessel to hold Christ's blood, nor a hand to apply it of our own; he that gives the blood gives the instrument to apply it. Faith is that instrument. All interpreters, by hyssop understand faith, Joh. iii. 16. Acts xvi. 31. and faith is fit for this work of applying Christ, because it's an emptying grace. An empty hand is a fit emblem of faith; other graces have something in themselves, but faith is only for receiving. Faith is a closing grace, it looks to something without itself. No grace is so rich as faith, and yet no grace so self-denying, 1 Pet. ii. 4. The formal nature of faith, is to cast its burden on another, and therefore fit for this work.

VI. *The lamb typified Christ in the eating of it.* 1. *The command for the eating of the paschal lamb,* Exo. xii. 8. It's the believer's duty to feed on Christ; to believe is to feed on him, Joh. vi. 47. *He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.* This he calls eating, v. 51, 53. *If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever.* All the promises of spiritual good by Christ, are made to the eating of Christ, Joh. vi. 54, 56. No union with him, till by faith we eat him. The

meat is not incorporated with the body, till a man eat it; Christ is not united to us, till we eat him. No spiritual strength can be expected from him till the soul actually feeds on him. It is not bread in the cupboard, but in the stomach, that feeds the body. *Christ is the only food of the soul.* There is no bread of life besides him; he that will not eat Christ, must of necessity starve, Joh. vi. 53. *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* There is neither righteousness, peace, comfort, grace, nor salvation, but in Christ. *Christ is delicate and costly food.* All the treasures in this world, are not able to buy one morsel of this lamb; had not God freely given him, had not he freely given himself, the world had never tasted of him! He is meat that quickens the dead, and preserves the living from death, Joh. vi. 50, 51.

II. For the order of eating: those rites, that were generally to be observed in all the passovers, were,—The persons who were to eat of it, have four qualifications. *They must be Israelites*, Exod. xii. 43, 45. Strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, are strangers to Christ. Those that are out of the church, have nothing to do with Jesus. Many out of the bosom of the church, may in God's secret purpose belong to Christ, but while in the state of strangers, they have no actual right to Jesus, Eph. ii. 12. Out of the church of God, in an ordinary way, there is no salvation, such are said to be *afar off; to be strangers and foreigners*, Eph. ii. xvii. 19. The Lord's way is, to bring men into the church, and so to salvation, Acts ii. 47. Excommunication is the delivering up to Satan, 1 Cor. i. 5. because such are put out of Christ's kingdom, into Satan's kingdom. Though there are many in the church that shall never have salvation, yet none but the true church can expect salvation. The church is Christ's sheepfold; out of this fold, is no life to be expected: it is God's ark; those out of this ark, are without all actual hope of salvation. There is no promise of salvation but to the church; no effectual visible means of salvation, but in the church. He that hath no relation to Israel, hath no right to Christ. *They must be circumcised persons*, Exod. xii. 48. Though a man were an Israelite by nation, yet if uncircumcised, he was not to eat the passover; to teach us, that no person uncircumcised in heart hath any good ground to think that Christ is his. Every unregenerate person, though in the church, is a

mere Pagan, Ps. liv. 3. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, 2 Cor. xv. 17. and Gal. v. 24. None can apply the merits of Christ, but those who have union with him; no person uncircumcised in heart hath. Till a man be inwardly renewed, he hath no scripture ground to apply to himself the merit of the death of Christ. *They must be legally clean*, Numb. ix. 6. to shew, that Christ will not interest unclean persons so continuing, in the merit of his death. *There was a great liberty afforded to strangers that were circumcised*, Exo. xii. 48. This was to teach the Jews that the Gentiles should be called into communion with Christ, as well as the Jews, Isa. liv. 1, &c. Isa. lx. 1, &c. All the proselytes were prefigurations of this *Jethro, Araunah the Jebusite, Job, Cornelius*, the centurion, *Ruth, Rahab*, &c. These were the first fruits of the Gentiles, which assured the full calling of their body; the Jews prayed for it, though when they saw it accomplished, they were offended. That the Gentiles should be partakers of the same privileges with themselves. God hath made the same grant to the Gentiles as to the Jews; they have the same covenant, promises, and Christ which the Jews had. 2. Another general rite was the time. *The passover must be eaten at one time by all*, Exo. xii. 8. One family was not to eat it one night, and another another night, but all the church in the same night, because Christ shed his blood indifferently for all his elect; one believer hath as much interest in Christ as another, *a common salvation*, Jude iii. the same promises, and redemption; one remission, adoption, covenant, heaven, marriage-supper, calling, belong to all the elect. Whatsoever scripture makes the portion of one, it does of all Christ's members. Also one believer hath as much need of Christ as another; all are by nature the children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3. all want pardon, all are equally weak in themselves; *Adam's guilt* hath passed upon all, Rom. v. 18. One believer hath no more cause to be proud of his condition than another, because all lie in the same pit of condemnation. That there is fulness enough in Christ for all his elect; he is full of *grace and truth*, Joh. i. 14. *Hath abundance of grace*, Rom. v. 17. hath nourishment to feed all the church; sufficient righteousness to justify all; grace to sanctify all; merit to save all given him of the Father. Though there be ever so great a multitude to be provided for, yet is redundancy of merit in Christ for

them all. *The passover must be eaten the same night on which it was killed*, Exo. xii. 8. to teach them, that Christ is ready to bestow himself upon his people when their danger is nearest and greatest. That night was the most perilous that ever they had in *Egypt*; all the first born of *Egypt* were destroyed. Israel might be afraid, whether, though the angel passed over them, yet the Egyptians might not in rage cut them off; Jesus therefore would have them take the cordial before hand, and is most ready to give comforts when trials are likely to be greatest, Isa. xli. 17, 18. Cordials will be most prized, and most carefully improved at such a time, Hos. ii. 14. in extraordinary trials expect extraordinary supports. That Christ must speedily be applied. The lamb must be eaten the same night it was slain. The soul must immediately apply Christ, when God makes tender of him; it's not safe to defer one night longer, *Behold now is the accepted time*, 2 Cor. vi. 2. The soul hath present need of Christ, therefore there should be a present closure, and tenders of Christ may not be always made; it's dangerous delaying, The destroying angel may come with his drawn sword before the morning, and it's the safest way to apply Christ to night. Never any repented for present complying with Christ, but many have for their sinful putting off. *The place.* There were two rites about this; it must be eaten in every family, and in one place of the family, Exo. xii. 46. and therefore the Chaldee translates it, *in one house, in one society*; they must stay together in the same room till they had eaten the passover. *Ainsworth* notes, that he that did eat the passover might only eat in one society. If two societies did eat in one house, they must make them a sign of distinction; the one company must turn their faces togetherward, and the other company must turn their faces togetherward, this is to shew the unity in the church of God. There must be unity and consent in doctrine and worship amongst the people of God. One must not eat the passover in one room, and another in another, but all in one society, Phil. ii. 1, 2. and Eph. iv. 3, &c. Unity is the church's beauty, strength and glory. *My love, my undefiled is but one*, Cant. vi. 8. Sad things are spoken against the makers of schisms, Rom. xvi. 17, 18. They, like the soldiers, rend the seamless coat of Christ. Schisms in worship, and heresies in doctrine, are the doom of the church; tyrants are not so hurtful to the church, as such. *Perhaps to teach governors*

of families to make spiritual provision for themselves and theirs The ruler of a family must not content himself, that he hath the paschal lamb, but he must bring it into the family, that his children and servants may eat of it. The fourth command reacheth both to the magistrate, and the governor of the family. Those families that have not Christ are unfurnished, and unblest families. The souls of servants and children have need of meat as well as their bodies. *Abraham* was careful of his children and servants, as well as of himself, and he hath God's approbation for it, Gen. xviii. 19. and *Joshua*, c. xxiv. 1, 5. He that once tasted of Christ himself, would gladly have all his feed on him. A fourth general rite is, the manner how it must be eaten. *It must be wholly eaten*, Exo. xii. 9, 10. and if all could not be eaten that night, it must not be reserved, but burnt with fire, to teach, *that all Christ must be applied*, 1 Cor. i. 30. We must take him in all those respects, or he is not at all applied. Every thing in Christ is absolutely necessary; there is no refuse in Christ. All other meat hath somewhat that needs to be pared off, but all in Christ is savoury. There is no dregs in this wine, no husk in this wheat. He that lays aside Christ in any one office, lays him aside in every office; he is as sweet and precious in every, as in any part. We expect Christ should save us wholly, and he expects that we receive him wholly. *That Christ keeps back nothing of himself from his people*: Should not Christ give himself wholly, he would not give himself sufficiently. Whatsoever good the believer can find in Christ, he may look upon it as his own. The power, wisdom and merit of Christ, are wholly made over to the believer; he loves thee with his whole heart, he preserves thee with his whole power, he thinks nothing in him too good, nor too precious for the poorest believer; Christ divides not himself; every believer hath him wholly, as if there were no other member.

The uses: *Take heed of rejecting any thing of Christ*. He that rejects him in any respect, rejects him altogether. Apply him in his life, and death, his holiness and merits. He shall never be healed by the merit of his death who doth not imitate the holiness of his life, 1 Pet. ii. 24. *Keep back nothing from Christ*, let him have your whole love, all your fear, all your obedience. Christ accounts himself to have nothing, if he have not all; let him enjoy you not dividedly, but wholly.

II. That which could not be eaten, must be burnt with fire in the morning. *To prevent idolatry.* This people was very subject to this sin, therefore God takes care to prevent it, *To teach them the abolition of all legal sacrifices in the morning of the gospel,* Cant. ii. ult. Do not judaize, Col. ii. 16, 17. *It must be eaten with unleavened bread,* Exo. xii. 8. Leaven is used in scripture in a good and a bad sense; in a good sense, for the work of grace in the heart, Mat. xiii. 33. This leaven is not forbidden; the passover is not regularly eaten, until this leaven be in the soul. *For evil doctrine,* Mat. xvi. 6, 12. The leaven of the Pharisee and Sadducees is the sinful doctrines they held. *For malice and envy,* 1 Cor. v. 8. Malice sours the heart, as leaven doth the meal. *For an evil conversation,* 1 Cor. v. 6. *For hypocrisy.* The leaven of Herod, Mar. viii. 15. and Luk. xii. 1. The leaven of the Pharisees. The apostle calls sincerity, unleavened bread. This leaven must not be used in the passover. And unleavened bread, wherewith they must eat it, are truth of doctrine, contrary to false doctrine; love, contrary to malice and envy; a holy conversation, contrary to an evil conversation; sincerity, contrary to hypocrisy. Divers things are taught from this particular. *Those that apply Christ, must avoid all leaven of false doctrine.* Believers must embrace the truth, and reject all errors. Truth is precious to Christ as well as holiness; he is the *truth*, Joh. xiv. 6. he came from heaven to preach the truth, and to seal it with his blood, Joh. xviii. 37. Truth unites us to God, as well as holiness, 1 Joh. ii. 24. As far as any person falls from truth, he falls from God. The leaven of error will sour the soul, as well as the leaven of profaneness. He that makes nothing of truth, will upon the same ground, make as little of holiness. The renewing of the understanding is a piece of the new creation as well as the renewing of the will. A gospel spirit is a spirit of a sound mind, as well as the spirit of love. 2 Tim. i. 7. The apostle requires that aged men be sound in the faith, as well as in charity, Tit. ii. 2. He that is profane, rejects Christ as a king, and he that is erroneous as a prophet. A rotten heart will cause a sinful life, 2 Tim. ii. 16. The uses 1. *It should persuade christians to avoid error, and cleave to the truth.* Error poisons the mind, as well as sin doth the heart. Erroneous persons reject Christ, as well as profane persons. 2. *It is not a needless thing for ministers to be zealous against error.* The apostles were as sharp in repro-

ving error, as profaneness, Gal. v. 6. which leaven is false doctrine.

II. *Those that apply Christ must put away malice and envy*, 2 Tim. i. 7. Eph. iv. 31. Col. iii. 8. It was love which made Christ die; love made him bear the burden, *To him that loved us, and washed away our sins with his blood*, Rev. i. 5. Those that feed on Christ, must take heed of the leaven of malice; Christ would not have any of his disciples hate, even their enemies, Mat. v. 44, 45. A malicious is a murderous spirit. *He that hates his brother is a murderer*, 1 Joh. iii. 15. Christ is all sweetness, and whosoever hath tasted of him, cannot harbour any bitterness. The uses. 1. *That malicious spirits have but little acquaintance with Christ*. Nothing is more contrary to Christ, than malice. *God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 Joh. iv. 16. The whole transaction of Christ is love; he that hath any interest in this, cannot harbour any venom of malice in his heart. 2. *Let all christians set themselves to root out this leaven*. Malice disparageth the gospel. A malicious spirit is an anti-evangelical spirit. The great gospel command is love, Joh. xiii. 34. When the love of Christ is shed abroad in the heart, rancour and malice can never settle.

III. *Those that have an interest in Christ must put away the leaven of an unholy conversation*. A good conscience within, and a good conversation without, become relations of Christ, Heb. xii. 22. An unholy conversation stains the gospel, and casts reproach upon Christ. *They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts*, Gal. v. 24. Christ will not bestow himself upon filthy swine. He that makes wickedness his diet, must not be fed with the flesh of Christ. *He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit*, 1 Cor. xvii. and where Christ's spirit dwells, there will be holiness without. The uses. 1. *How do they deceive themselves that think they are interested in Christ, and yet are full of all kind of wickedness?* They claim all gospel comforts, and yet walk in all ungodly practices. These men can claim interest in Christ no more than Devils, Tit. ii. 11, 12. If we search the charter of christians, we shall find holiness their qualification. He that is Christ's servant wears his badge. He that will be partaker of the privileges of Christ, must of the nature of him.

IV. *Those that claim Christ must put away the leaven of hypocrisy.* Christ will give neither food nor shelter to dissemblers. *The wisdom that is from above is without hypocrisy,* Jam. iii. 17. The hypocrite dishonors Christ as much as the profane. Sincerity is the crown of all graces; hypocrisy the bane of all actions. The hypocrite betrays Christ with a kiss, as *Judas* did. Christ looks to hearts as well as actions. The mask of hypocrisy may hide us from men, it cannot from God. All gospel-privileges are settled upon the single hearted. An hypocrite shall not come before God, Joh. xiii. 16. Hypocrisy may let a man into the visible church, it cannot into heaven. The uses. 1. *It should scare all from hypocrisy.* All our pretendings will do us no good if we be hypocrites. A Devil transformed, is the worst of devils. An hypocrite is a Devil in *Samuel's* mantle. Christ abhors a painted saint, as much as he loves a real believer. 2. *It should provoke all that are sincere, to bless God for their sincerity.* God was as gracious in removing hypocrisy, as profaneness. The hypocrite's condition is no better than the profane in this life, and it will be much worse in the other, he shall have as hot a hell as an open opposer of Christ.

IV. *It must be eaten with bitter herbs,* Exo. xii. 8. What kind of herbs they were is not expressed, nor is it material; the quality of them is expressed, as bitterness, or bitter-nesses, this was to teach us, that Christ is only applied to them that are under bitterness of heart by reason of sin. None but the penitent hath any right to apply Christ. Christ calls only such to be partakers of himself, Mat. xi. 28. He was anointed to preach the comforts of the gospel only to such, Isa. lxi. 1, 2. *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* That only such will accept of Christ, Mat. ix. 12. *They that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick.* He that sees not himself lost, will never accept of the tender of salvation, Rev. iii. 17, 18. The uses. How needful the preaching of the law is; this makes way for the gospel; this humbles, works sense of sin, breaks, wounds, and then Christ comes and heals. It shews the nature of true repentance; it's a sin imbittering grace. Ministers must apply Christ to such as are in bitterness of sin. Christ is the only cure for a wounded soul. *Christ and the cross go together.* These bitter herbs represent sufferings which attend the true profession of Christ, Mat.

xvi. 24. All do not suffer alike, but all Christ's disciples suffer more or less. Gospel-comforts are made sweeter by sufferings; the believer hereby is made conformable to Christ. Think not strange at sufferings; fear them not. The sweet lamb, sweetens bitter herbs; the bitter herbs makes the lamb sweeter.

II. The rites peculiar to the first passover were five, They must eat it, 1. *With their loins girded.* 2. *With their shoes on their feet.* 3. *With their staff in their hand.* 4. *In haste.* 5. *None of them must go out of the door of his house until the morning,* Exo. xii. 11, 22. That these were peculiar only to the first passover, appears, *Because no mention is made of any of these rites in any of those places where the celebration of the passover is afterwards commanded,* Deut. xvi. 1, 2, 3. *We do not read that our Saviour, when he celebrated the last passover with his disciples, observed any of these.* Christ and his disciples did not eat it standing, but sitting, without any girding of their loins or staves in their hand, they did not stay within the house all that night but went into the garden, and into the mount of Olives, Mat. xxvi. 30. *These rites were not in force in the following passovers.* They were now to pass away for their lives, but in Canaan they were settled in safety, and had no need to use such rites as were appointed only for their pilgrim estate. *We read nothing of these rites in that famous passover which King Josiah kept,* 2 Chron. xxxv and therefore it is not likely they were perpetual laws.

I shall gather some useful observations from these fore-mentioned rites. 1. *They must eat it with their loins girded their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand,* these imply one thing. This is the pilgrim's posture, and we may learn from hence, *that those that gave up themselves to Christ, must account themselves as pilgrims in the world,* so did David, Psl. xxxix. 12. and the Patriarchs, Heb. xi. 13. Heaven is the believers country, the earth is a place of pilgrimage; that they were but pilgrims is manifest, *for their kindred are not on earth but in heaven.* They have natural relations on earth, but their spiritual relations are in heaven. There is God their father, Christ their elder brother, and angels their guardians. *Their inheritance is not on earth but in heaven.* They have some possessions

here, which God gives them, but their grand inheritance is above, 1 Pet. i. 4. It would be sad, if they had not a better portion than they have here. *Their eternal abode is not on earth, but in heaven.* They continue but a few years in *Egypt*, but in *Canaan* they have a settled abode; here they dwell but in tents, but there they shall dwell in fixed mansions, 2 Cor. v. 1. *Their hopes are not in earth, but in heaven.* *The hope laid up in heaven*, Col. i. 5. Believers have the grace of hope on earth, but the object of their hope, is principally in heaven; all these shew their pilgrim estate, therefore, *expect to be entertained like pilgrims.* Believers mistake or forget their condition, when they look for great preferments in the world. The *Egyptians* will prefer the *Egyptians*. *Israel* must expect to make brick and carry burdens, they must not look for promotions. Sometimes God so orders it, that his *Israel* is preferred, even in strange lands, Dan. ii. 48, 49. God sets up some to make provision for the rest, that his may have some of the best rank to be refugees to them, but generally they are used like strangers. The world's disowning saints is a good character, they are but pilgrims on earth. *Let your carriage be holy. Be not conformed to the world but transformed*, Rom. xii. 2. Saints must not walk in those sensualities, revellings, and other ungodly practices, that the world walks in, 1 Pet. ii. 11. Let the *Egyptians* be drunkards, covetous, profane, licentious, but let not *Israel* be so. *Let not your hearts be set on worldly things*, Col. iii. 1, 2. Strangers do not set their hearts on the pleasant fields, or stately buildings which they behold, they look upon them and so pass away; so should believers. For a believer to fall in love with worldly vanities, is as ridiculous as for strangers to dote on the beautiful dwellings which they behold in other lands. 2. *Those that give up themselves to Christ, should be ready for all services to which they are called.* This posture notes a readiness for working and travelling, Luk. xii. 35, 36. so Isa. v. 27. God would have his people prepared to do his will, and to walk in his way, 1 Tim. vi. 18. *ready to distribute*, Tit. iii. 1. *ready to every good work.* We should be ready to do, suffer, work, walk, pray, and to hear, whenever God gives us a call; this readiness is honorable, *It's an evidence of an angelical frame of heart.* Angels are described in a standing posture, as ready to undertake any service for God, 2 Chron. i. 18, 19. Standing is an evidence of their reverence, and readiness to

be employed by God ; they have their eye on God, that whensoever he becks, they may run on his errand. That saint is most like the angels, that is ready to run at God's command. *It's a testimony of real love to God and his service.* Love of holy employments is honorable, Jer. xxx. 21. No better testimony of heart-encouragement to God's service, than an universal readiness for its present performance ; it's profitable. *This readiness makes us more active in it.* Why are men so cold and slothful in the work of God, but because they are unready for it ? He that is unshod and ungirded in his journey, must needs make many a stop, which such as are prepared need not make. *This readiness will procure for us more assistance from God.* When God sees a person prepared, he will strengthen his hands, and establish his heart, Psl. cxxxviii. 3. If any person may expect the fulfilling of this promise, he may that is ready to undertake God's work whensoever he is called. *This blames our neglect of this duty.* When God calls us to any work, we have our shoes off, our loins ungirded, our staves to seek, unready for prayer, for hearing, and for every good service. We are ready to serve the world, or sin, but alas ! when God calls we have all our garments to put on, It was not so with David, Psl. xxvii. 8. *Let it put us upon all holy endeavours this way.* Stand in a posture of readiness, that when God calls, you may say, *Speak Lord, for thy servants hear.* You expect your servants should have all in readiness to obey your command ; why should not you be ready to receive the commands of your master ? If a servant should have his shoes to seek, and his girdle out of the way when you call, could you always bear it ? How should God bear it at your hands ? You would have God ready to bestow upon you what good you want ; and so he is ready to hear, to forgive, to bless, to remove all evils which pinch, to communicate all good which is desired, and shall not we be ready to serve him ? It is an amazing thing that God should wait on men, which should put us into a waiting posture. *The excellency of all God's service should put us into this posture.* His work is not drudgery or dishonorable, but very honorable and profitable God lays commands, not that he may gain anything, but that we may gain grace, comfort, and peace on earth, and eternal happiness in heaven.

II. *They must eat it in haste.* This is again mentioned,

Deut. xvi. 3. it teaches, *What speed the soul should make to lay hold on the tender of salvation by Christ.* When Christ calls *Zaccheus*, he came down quickly, Luk. xix. 5, 6. *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence*, Mat. xi. 12. We may be too hasty about other things; we cannot use too much speed in this matter, the sooner the better. *It's a necessary work.* The soul is undone for ever, if this work be undone. If Christ be not ours, hell must for ever. *It's a work that cannot be done when men will.* God does not always make the tender; men have not always hearts to accept of it. A man hath no time but the present moment, 2 Cor. vi. 2. *Let this persuade such as have not yet applied Christ, to apply with haste.* The longer you defer, the less appetite you will have for Christ: you may be past a possibility of applying him in a very little time. Alas! what is your life? the most uncertain thing in the world. You know not how much comfort you lose by an hour's delay. The hungry man eats with haste; the thirsty soul makes haste to the fountain. Christ is as needful to the soul, as either meat or drink to the body. Men are in haste to apply worldly things. The sick man would have his physic instantly; the wounded, his plaister without delay; the naked, would be immediately clothed. No good so absolutely necessary as this, therefore do not defer longer. *You that have applied Christ, repent you did not sooner apply him.* Two things the soul would eternally mourn for in heaven, if any sorrow could enter there; its loving Christ so little and so late. *What speed men should make to get out of spiritual bondage.* Men are willing to get out of prison. *Pharaoh's* butler was glad when his chains were off, and so was *Joseph*. The bondage of sin is the worst of imprisonments, and therefore the soul should make haste out of that estate. *Be persuaded then to hasten your escape from this sad estate.* Stay not an hour longer; thy noble soul is the Devil's drudge, thou art working out thy own destruction, which suddenly may fall upon thee. You that are escaped, endeavour to bless God, and to get others out of these bands.

III. They must none of them go forth until the morning out of their houses, Exo. xii. 22. this teaches us, 1. *That Christ's people must continue in him.* Perseverance in the faith of Christ, and in obedience, is as necessary as applying Christ. Israel must converse with Egyptians no more.

Perseverance is commanded, Col. ii. 6. All the promises are made to them that continue in faith and obedience. *Abide in me, and I in you*, Joh. xv. 4, &c. He that abides not in Christ, never was in him. This blames such as apostatize. Many apostatize from faith or obedience; these are greater slaves to sin, than before, their damnation will be double, 2 Pet. ii. ult. Labor to persevere; remember *Lot's wife*. God hath promised perseverance, Job. xvii. 9. Zach. x. 12. Pray for this promise. 2. *Those that would be safe in danger, must keep within the church of Christ*, Isa. iv. 5, 6. Stragglers expose themselves to hazard. 3. *How careful God is in times of public calamity to take care of his*; he builds Noah an ark, Gen. vi. marks the mourners, Ezech. ix. 4. hath chambers for his church, Isa. xxvi. 20. loves his people, and hath promised to preserve them. It's good being God's, even in reference to temporal judgments. 4. *That which is destructive to the wicked, God can make preservative to his people*. The Egyptians were slain in their houses, and yet the houses of Israel were their preservation.

III. How Christ excels the paschal lamb, this I shall shew in these eight particulars. 1. *The Jewish passover was to be eaten but once a year*. The fourteenth day of the first month was the set time for its celebration; but Christ, our passover, is eaten every day. Jesus is the believer's daily provision; the soul feeds on him in every prayer, sermon, and sacrament. Christ is not only an anniversary, but a daily passover. 2. *The Jewish passover was to be celebrated but in one place*, the first was kept in *Egypt*, all the following passovers were to be kept only in that place which God should choose for public worship, Deut. xvi. 5, 6: this place was first the tabernacle, afterwards the temple. And therefore in the days of King *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*, the people were summoned to *Jerusalem* to keep the passover, 2 Chron. xxx. 5. but Christ our passover is eaten in every place, in every congregation where the ordinances are dispensed; every place where the worship of God is, is as *Jerusalem* was in this respect. 3. *The Jewish passover was but temporary*, being but typical, it was to have an end, when Christ should be offered up; it's said indeed, Exo. xii. 14. that it should be observed as an ordinance for ever, but for ever there signifies not strictly time without end, but during the time of that administration; for when the real passover was sacrifici-

ced; what need was there to keep up the typical one; but the christian's passover shall never cease. The church shall observe this feast to the end of the world, see 1 Cor. xi. 26.

4. *Whatsoever the paschal lamb did to benefit the church, it did only as related to Christ.* The sprinkling of that blood did not of itself sanctify or preserve, but only as it prefigured Christ; but the blood of Christ hath virtue in itself to heal, comfort, purify, and to defend from the wrath of God.

5. *The paschal lamb after it was sacrificed lived no more,* but Christ, though killed, lives for ever, he quickened his own dead body, Rom. i. 4. 6. *The paschal lamb did not deliver them out of Egypt.* It was a memorial of God's deliverance, but our passover not only holds out a memorial of deliverance wrought, but himself is our deliverer. The redeemer shall come out of Zion, Isa. lix. 20. he smote the Egyptians and delivered his Israel; he is the worker out of our deliverance.

7. *Infants were not to eat of the Jewish passover.* They were not capable of remembering their deliverance out of Egypt, nor could they reach the great end of the passover; but children may feed on the gospel-passover, not on the Lord's supper, for they are not capable of discerning the Lord's body; 1 Cor. xi. 29. but on the real passover, Christ is milk for babes, as well as strong meat for those that are of grown stature. 8. *Women were not bound to eat the Jewish passover.* 'Tis likely they did in Egypt, but they were not bound afterwards. The law requires that the males of a full age should appear at Jerusalem, Exo. xxiii. 17. but the women were not under this obligation, they might go up, and did sometimes; but this gospel-passover must be observed by women as well as men. *In Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female,* Gal. iii. 28.

Information. 1. *That the Jewish church had the knowledge of Christ as well as we.* There was never since the fall any other way of salvation but Jesus, and the Jews must have knowledge of him, or they could not be saved; their knowledge was more dark than ours, but it was a true knowledge, 1 Cor. x. 3. The same lamb of God set forth as crucified in their passover, is set forth in our passover, as crucified. 2. *That the christian church is every way complete in Christ, as well as the Jewish,* Col. ii. 10. They have no ordinance but we have something equivalent; they had their sacrifices, we have Christ, the end of all their sacrifices;

they had circumcision, so have we; they had a passover, so have we, yea, we are more complete than they, *They had the shadow of good things to come*, Heb. x. 1. we have the very substance of the things themselves; our worship is more spiritual, and our promises more excellent than theirs; Christ is more clearly discovered to us than he was to them.

3. *How usual in scripture are those sacramental speeches of the sign for the thing signified, and of the thing signified for the sign.* Christ is called our passover by a metonymy of the substance for the sign. The bread is called Christ's body the wine, his blood, not that they are really so, but because they represent Christ's body and blood. Christ is the door and vine, not in a real, but in a metaphorical sense. The want of considering this, is the ground of the absurd opinion of transubstantiation. 4. *That there is excellent nourishment in Christ.* The passover did nourish Israel. Christ is the only nourishment of the soul, *A feast*, Isa. xxv. 6. Christ is this feast, yea a *marriage feast*, Mat. xxii. 2, 3. This is nothing else but those dainties which the believer hath in Christ, who is plentiful and delicate nourishment.

Exhortation. 1. *This should persuade believers to observe this gospel-passover.* It was their duty to keep the passover in its season; he did incur the wrath of God, and cutting off from God's people, that being clean did neglect the passover in its season, Numb. ix. 13. He that doth not by faith feed on Christ, must needs be cut off; there is no other way of deliverance from God's wrath, but only by believing and feeding on Christ, Joh. vi. 55. 2. *This should stir up all the church of God to be as careful about the celebration of the gospel-passover, as the Jews were about their passover.* The Lord's supper is the evangelical passover; this is a memorial of our deliverance from the bondage of sin, and is a feeding-ordinance as well as that; and surely God would have us as careful in this passover, as he expected the Jews should be when they did eat theirs. Let me press these rules. *You that come to the sacrament of the supper be of circumcised hearts.* No others can with any comfort eat of this passover, 1 Cor. xi. 28. This ordinance is not appointed to beget, but to confirm grace. He that eats and drinks in uncircumcision of heart, may expect the fruit of so doing will be hardness of heart. A circumcised heart is a new, a pliable, a tender, and a bleeding heart. *You must be clean persons.*

Legal uncleanness made a person unfit for the Jewish passover, and moral uncleanness will render a person unfit for gospel-passover. He that comes to the sacrament with his uncleanness upon him, will find that feast poison, and not nourishment. Great mortality was amongst the Corinthians for allowing unclean persons to eat the sacrament, 1 Cor. xi. 30. *You must purge out all the old leaven of malice.* A malicious heart is unfit for the Lord's supper; it's a sacrament of communion of saints one with another, where the great love of God and Christ is remembered. How doth he have fellowship with saints and remember Christ's love, whose heart is uncharitable towards others? The leaven of malice will hinder the comfort of the sacrament. *You must get the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* The hypocrite in heart may get admittance from men, but he hath none from Christ. Purge out this leaven, and get sincerity. That heart is sincere that allows no sin; that hath sincere ends in holy undertakings; that mourns for insincerity, and bewails inward distempers. He that eats the passover thus, eats it with acceptance; it shall be food to the sincere, when it shall be poison to the hypocrite. *You must eat it with bitter herbs, (i. e.) a sense of the misery of our bondage and spiritual compunction for sin.* Christ tastes sweetly to none but the penitent sinner, none else will fully and universally accept of Christ. All the promises of comfort are made to the penitent and broken-hearted sinner, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3.. *You must eat it with thankfulness,* 2 Chro. xxx. 21. Here is a memorial of greatest mercy from God; here are all the promises of the covenant sealed; here is the nearest communion man hath with God in this world. *Christ sung an hymn with his disciples,* Mat. xxvi. 30. The care of the Jews will rise up against us, if we be not as exact in the keeping of our passover as they were in theirs.

Consolation 1. *That we shall not want spiritual provision.* The paschal lamb will be food in all straits. 2. *That reconciliation is wrought by Christ's blood.* The blood of the paschal lamb was a typical, Christ's blood is a real consideration, Col. v. 20. 3. *That the destroying wrath of God shall never seize on any who have an interest in Christ,* 1 Thess. i. 10. 4. *That those in Christ shall never be under the bondage of Egypt again.* Pharaoh may

make out his bands, but shall not prevail. The eating of the passover was a spiritual pawn to the Israel of God, that they should be *Pharaoh's* slaves no longer. When Christ is ours, the devil's yoke is broken off from our necks, and it shall never return,

FINIS.



Scorggie, Printer, Woolwich.

CORRIGENDA

<i>Page</i>	
18	Line 10, for hominies, read homines
46 . .	38 for munimemta, read munimenta
51 . .	14 for 1. 6. 8. read 1 Tim 6. 8.
56 . .	27 for it, read in
84 . .	39 for middle. read meddle
115 . .	27 for aru, read are
125 . .	8 for Lam. 3: 9. read Lam. 1: 9.
163 . .	29 for againt, read against
185 . .	31 for Isa. 42. 2. read Isa. 53. 2.
205 . .	27 for cæstetial, read celestial
294 . .	31 for lump, read lamp
299 . .	2 for weet, read sweet
364 . .	32 for Amos 5. 8. read Amos 8. 5.
387 . .	39 for Exortation, read Exhortation
412 . .	31 for canno the, read cannot be
472 . .	20 for helmat, read helmet

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